

Post – Operative Care

• Care of the Mouth

- **Brushing and Flossing:** The day following surgery, begin brushing and flossing the non-surgical areas. AVOID THE SURGICAL SITES, you may BRUSH THE TOOTH, STAY AWAY from the GUM LINE until after your scheduled post-operative visit. You may notice a white film over the surgical sites, this is completely normal.
- **Mouth Rinse:** Use the prescribed mouth rinse (Peridex) as directed. Begin 2 days prior to surgery. Use a gentle rinsing motion (no hard swishing). Continue for **Two Weeks** following surgery.
- **Electric Toothbrushes:** DO NOT use an electric toothbrush for six weeks following surgery.
- **Water Pik or Hydro-Floss:** DO NOT use a Water-Pik or Hydro-Floss for at least 6 weeks following surgery. No flossing in the area of surgery for six weeks after surgery.
- **Lips and Corners of Mouth:** When the lips and corners of your mouth are stretched, they may become dry and crack. Apply Triple Antibiotic or Neosporin as needed for comfort and healing.

• Eating

- **First 24 hours:** Adequate nutrition is essential for normal healing. Following surgery, your diet should be restricted to liquids or very soft foods. Dietary supplements such as Instant Breakfast or Ensure are good choices. AVOID PEROXIDE, ALCOHOL, AND CARBONATED BEVERAGES until your scheduled post-op visit. (Typically 2 weeks after surgery)
- **It is very important that you do not drink through a straw and no hard swishing (gentle rinsing motions only)**
- **After 24 hours:** Gradually progress to soft foods such as cooked vegetables, baked fish, eggs, pasta, tuna, and chicken, which are easily chewed and swallowed. DO NOT SKIP MEALS. If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort, and heal faster. DO NOT EAT FOODS WITH SHARP EDGES AND AVOID GRAINY FOODS WITH SMALL SEEDS FOR THE FIRST WEEK. You may rinse with warm salt water four to five times a day (gentle swishing only)

• Medications

- **Pain Medications:** Take pain medication within one hour after surgery with milk, fruit juice or a full glass of water. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach. This medication may be repeated every four to six hours as needed for discomfort. If nausea persists, discontinue use and call our office. DO NOT USE ASPIRIN or products containing aspirin for one week following surgery. Aspirin can contribute to post-operative bleeding problems. Only non-aspirin pain relievers, such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, or Advil, are acceptable following surgery. Pain medications may cause constipation and a stool softener such as *Colace* may be taken in conjunction with pain medications.
- **Antibiotics:** Take prescribed antibiotics as directed until completely gone.
- **Steroid (Decadron):** PRESCRIBED FOR SWELLING, take as directed.
- **Sedation:** Take as prescribed. DO NOT DRIVE.

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- **Swelling**

- **Ice Packs:** Some swelling usually occurs after surgery. To minimize this, you will be advised to use ice packs. Place the ice pack on the outside of your face, over the treated area, **for ten minutes, and then take it off for ten minutes.** Continue to apply ice packs as much as possible for the first 24 hours after surgery. Frozen bagged vegetables make great ice packs. If SWELLING occurs, it will be at its MAXIMUM 72 hours (3 days) after surgery, which IS NORMAL.

- **Bleeding**

- Slight bleeding or oozing is normal during the first one to two days following surgery. If bleeding persists, place gauze or a moistened tea bag over the area and bite gently, exerting light pressure for 15 minutes. If excessive bleeding occurs, call our office.
- You may consider placing towels over your pillows while sleeping to prevent staining them.

- **Activities**

- **Rest:** Plan to rest at home the remainder of the day of surgery and the following day. You may read, watch TV, or work at your desk at home. When sleeping, ELEVATE YOUR HEAD to decrease swelling.
- **After 24 hours:** You may return to your regular schedule, but avoid strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, jogging, exercise programs, etc. for one week following surgery.

- **Smoking**

- **DO NOT SMOKE for one week before and after surgery.** Smoking is detrimental to healing tissues and will affect the results of surgery. Also, try to cut down on smoking through the healing process.

- **Surgical Protective Appliances**

- In some surgical procedures, a palatal appliance will be made for your comfort during healing. Wear the appliance full-time for the first 48 hours, and after, only as needed for comfort. Do not wear the appliance full time after the first 48 hours as the tissue requires exposure to air and oxygen in order to heal well.

- **Post-Operative Appointment**

- At your post-op visit you will have the surgical site checked for healing progress, and possibly to have sutures removed.
- **Resorbable Sutures:** The resorbable sutures usually will disappear by the time you return for your post-operative visit.
- **Non-Resorbable Sutures:** If non-resorbable sutures were placed, they will be removed at your post-operative visit. For most procedures, suture removal must be done 10 – 14 days after surgery unless otherwise instructed. At times the sutures may fall down and bother your tongue. If this occurs, please call us and we will be glad to evaluate.

We want you to be as comfortable as possible following surgery.

Please call our office if you have any questions or problems