

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Sedation or General Anesthesia: Patients should be accompanied by a responsible person for 24 hours after leaving the office. Dizziness associated with standing or sudden movements should be expected. Therefore, precautions against a possible fall should be taken. The patient is not permitted to drive for at least 24 hours following surgery.

Pain and Medications: The local anesthetic administered during surgery normally lasts from 2 - 7 hours, and it may be difficult to control the pain once the anesthetic wears off. Patients experience pain and discomfort in varying degrees, depending upon the amount of surgery. This is usually controlled with prescription pain medications. If you do not achieve adequate pain relief, you may supplement each pill with Tylenol or Advil.

DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN. Try to eat something before the pain medication, unless otherwise instructed. Patients are instructed to start on antibiotics the day of surgery.

Bleeding: Bleeding follows every surgery and should not alarm you unless it is excessive and persistent. Placing a firm roll of gauze directly over the surgical site and exerting continuous pressure for at least 30 minutes and changing every 20 minutes thereafter can control bleeding. If you run out of gauze you can use a tea bag. Simply run the tea bag under water, rinse it out and then place it on the surgical site and bite down to apply pressure.

Swelling and Discoloration: This is part of the healing process and unless it is extreme, it serves no practical importance. Place an ice bag or a bag of frozen vegetables to your face for 24 to 36 hours (20 minutes, 10 minutes off). The earlier this is started, the more effective because swelling is usually greatest 48 to 72 hours after surgery. **DO NOT** apply external heat until the third day after surgery. The patient should be elevated on 2 to 3 pillows for the first two nights after surgery.

Diet: Cool liquids and/or soft foods are recommended until the first return visit after surgery. After this, a regular diet may be eaten as tolerated. **DO NOT DRINK THROUGH A STRAW.**

Rinsing and Brushing: **DO NOT RINSE UNTIL THE FOLLOWING MORNING.** Forceful rinsing could dislodge the blood clot and delay healing. In the morning, gently rinse with a half teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water. Repeat 5 to 6 times during the day and continue for 2 weeks. Patients may brush and floss their teeth as normal, avoiding the surgical site. Do not pick at the site or sutures.

Smoking: It has been proven that smoking may delay healing and in some cases cause increased postoperative pain as well as the formation of a dry socket.

Sutures: The sutures that the doctor used will dissolve on their own in 5 to 7 days, unless otherwise specified. Avoid extremely hot foods and liquids during this period, because they will cause the sutures to dissolve too fast.

Allergic Reactions: If the patient develops a rash or itchiness of any kind, call immediately.