



POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

A. Wound Care

1. Bite firmly on the gauze pack that has been placed until you arrive home, then remove it gently.
2. Do not smoke for one week because this can interfere with the healing process.

B. Bleeding

1. Some blood will ooze from the area of surgery and is normal. You may find a blood stain on your pillow in the morning.
2. Do not spit or suck through a straw for 24 hours, since this promotes bleeding.
3. If bleeding begins again, place a small damp gauze pack or moist tea bag directly over the area bleeding and bite firmly for 20 minutes.
4. Keep your head elevated with several pillows or sit in a lounge chair.

C. Discomfort

1. Some discomfort is normal after surgery. It can be controlled but not eliminated by taking the pain pills prescribed.
2. Take your pain pills with liquids and food to prevent nausea.
3. Do not drive or drink alcohol if you are taking prescription pain pills.

D. Medications

1. If nausea, vomiting, rash or hives occur, discontinue all medications and contact the office.
2. Individuals taking oral contraceptives should check with their physician regarding any effects that the prescribed antibiotics and other medications may have.

E. Diet

1. It is important to drink a large volume of fluids.
2. Eat normal regular meals as soon as possible after surgery. Soft foods, such as ice cream, soup, eggs and yogurt are suggested for the first day. A daily vitamin is also recommended.

F. Oral Hygiene

1. Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth for the first day after surgery.
2. After that, rinse gently with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in a 8 oz. glass of warm water) after meals and at bedtime, and resume gentle brushing.

G. Swelling

1. Swelling after surgery is a normal body reaction. It reaches its maximum approximately 72 hours after surgery and usually lasts 6 to 8 days.
2. Applying ice packs over the area of surgery (20 minutes on and 20 minutes off) for the first 24 hours helps control swelling. After the first 24 hours, ice should no longer be applied and moist heat is advisable.

H. Rest

1. Avoid strenuous activity for 72 hours after your surgery.

I. Bruising

1. You may experience some mild bruising in the area of your surgery. This is a normal response in some persons and should not be a cause for alarm. It will disappear in 7 to 14 days.

J. Stiffness

1. After surgery you may experience jaw or muscle stiffness and limited opening of your mouth. This is normal and will improve in 5 to 10 days. By resuming a normal diet your jaw function will slowly improve.

K. Stitches

1. If stitches have been placed in the area of your surgery, they will dissolve over the next one to seven days. Be aware that stitches are often placed between your other teeth.

Call the office if:

1. You experience excessive discomfort that you cannot control with your pain pills.
2. You have bleeding that you cannot control by biting on gauze.
3. You have increasing swelling after the third day following your surgery.
4. You have questions.

If you need to reach us after hours, please call our answering service at 792-3111 and they will promptly page a member of our staff to return your call.