

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

*****PLEASE READ BOTH SIDES OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY*****

Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of the instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification. Our number is (757)484-9441.

DAY OF SURGERY

FIRST HOUR: Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. The packs may be gently removed after 30 minutes. If active bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes.

EXERCISE CARE: Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do **NOT** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects. You may brush your teeth gently. **PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 72 hours, since this is very detrimental to healing and may cause a dry socket.

PERSISTENT BLEEDING: Bleeding should never be severe. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a tea bag for 20 or 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office. (757)484-9441.

SWELLING: Swelling is often associated with oral surgery. It can be minimized by using a cold pack or ice bag applied firmly to the cheek. This should be applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the first 24 hours after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed.

PAIN: Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication. **If you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you should be able to manage any discomfort better.** Some patients find that stronger pain medicine causes nausea, but if you precede each pain pill with a small amount of food, chances for nausea will be reduced. The effects of pain medications vary widely among individuals. If you do not achieve adequate relief at first, you may supplement each pain pill with **one** of the following Ibuprofen/Motrin/Advil/Alleve. Remember that the most severe pain is usually within six hours after the local anesthetic wears off; after that your need for medicine should lessen.

NAUSEA: Nausea may occur common after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food, and taking the pill with a large volume of water. If nausea is persistent call us for a prescription for nausea.

DIET: Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Avoid extremely hot foods. Do not use a straw for the first few days after surgery. It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.) It is best to avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you may gradually progress to solid foods. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

SHARP EDGES: If you feel something hard or sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling the bony walls which once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

BRUSHING: Begin your normal oral hygiene routine the next day after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

WARM MOIST COMPRESSES once or twice a day for 15 minutes can also help reduce swelling and stiffness after day 3.

HEALING: Normal healing after tooth extraction should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually some swelling. On the third day you should be more comfortable and, although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. **The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual, steady improvement.** If you don't see continued improvement, please call our office. If you are given a plastic-irrigating syringe, **DO NOT** use it for the first five days. Then use it daily according to the instructions until you are certain the tooth socket has closed completely and that there is no chance of any food particles lodging in the socket.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office. A 24-hour answering service is available to contact the doctor on call after hours. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern. **PLEASE NOTE: telephone calls for narcotic (pain killer) prescription renewals are ONLY accepted during office hours.**

REMOVAL OF PATHOLOGY – CERTAIN SOFT TISSUE AREAS IN AND AROUND THE TEETH AND BONE MAY APPEAR ABNORMAL AT THE TIME OF TREATMENT REQUIRING TISSUE SPECIMENS TO BE SENT FOR MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION. WE WILL INFORM YOU IF THESE HAVE BEEN SENT AND THEIR OUTCOME. THE PATHOLOGY OFFICE WILL USUALLY BILL YOUR INSURANCE CARRIER OR CONTACT YOU DIRECTLY FOR INFORMATION.

RETURN APPOINTMENT FOR _____

CALL US AT 484-9441 IF YOU CANNOT MAKE YOUR POST-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT. WE WILL RESCHEDULE.