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## Information Following Dental Surgery

### General Information

Discomfort following dental surgery is normal. Following the recommended use of analgesic (pain relieving) medications should control and minimize your discomfort. You may expect some swelling after dental surgery. Swelling is a part of the natural healing process and may last several weeks. This is dependent on the nature and the extent of your surgery. Individuals with fair skin or who bruise easily may anticipate some discoloration (bruising) of the skin in the area surrounding the surgical procedure. Any bruising typically resolves within a few weeks.

### Post Operative Instructions

1. Apply ice packs at 15 minute intervals once or twice per hour throughout the first day to minimize swelling and discomfort.
2. **Do Not** lift your lips to “look” at the surgery area and minimize chewing on the treated side. It is possible to tear sutures, open the incision, and delay healing.
3. A soft diet is recommended.
4. Very gentle brushing of the teeth in the surgical area is recommended starting the day after surgery to help remove plaque and impacted food. Our staff will review the proper technique with you. Avoid brushing the teeth in the surgical area for the first day only. Flossing in the surgical area may typically be resumed 10-14 days following surgery.
5. An antibacterial mouthwash will be prescribed. Starting the day after surgery use twice daily (after breakfast and before bed) for 14 days. DO rinse, only lightly, for the first 48 hours. Do not rinse aggressively for 7 days following a bone graft surgery.
6. If an antibiotic is prescribed, you should take the medication exactly as directed on the prescription to completion
7. Sutures may begin to unravel and come out before your follow-up appointment. If this occurs within the first 3 days, then call the office as additional sutures may need to be placed. If this occurs after the third day and the gum tissue remains in place, then you may trim any hanging or loose sutures.
8. **DO NOT SMOKE OR USE ORAL TOBACCO FOR 72 HOURS!**
9. If you have **ANY** concerns or questions, then please call our office. Usually a single explanation can resolve the situation and free you of worry. For after hours or weekend emergencies please also call the office and you may page Dr. Chittaphong through our automated phone system. **Office: (858) 564-8546**

### When Should you notify a doctor?

1. If profuse bleeding continues after 3-4 hours of applied pressure. Refer to Home Care Instructions – Bleeding
2. If you are unable to maintain a nutritious diet after 48 hours. Refer to Home Care Instructions – Dietary Needs
3. Your medication DOES NOT relieve or manage your discomfort
4. If pain or swelling increases after the third day.
5. If the sutures (stitches) become loose or dislodged prior to the third day.
6. If an oral bandage or dressing that was placed becomes dislodged prior to the third day.
7. If you have any symptoms which indicate a reaction or allergy to a medication such as:
8. If your body temperature remains higher than 100 degrees F. taken orally after the third day.

## **Your home care instructions**

### **Bleeding**

To slow and prevent bleeding, place light pressure over the surgical area with a moisten gauze pack. Pressure should be applied in 15 minute intervals and repeated until the bleeding is controlled. Pressure over a surgical site on the side of the jaw can be applied by pressing on the outer cheek with an ice pack. Pressure over an extraction or implant site can be applied by biting on a gauze pack directly over the site. The light pressure will assist in the body's natural blood clotting process.

If bleeding persists without slowing for several hours, apply a moist tea bag wrapped in gauze and repeat the steps above. The tannic acid in the tea will assist in controlling the bleeding.

If profuse bleeding is still occurring after 3-4 hours, and the above measures have been taken, call our office immediately.

DO NOT exercise, use physical force, or enter stressful situations for the first 72 hours or until the medications and natural healing process allows. These activities will increase your heart rate and blood pressure and have an adverse affect on your healing process.

DO NOT operate heavy or hazardous equipment for the first 24 hours or until the medications and natural healing process allow.

### **Swelling**

Apply ice packs at 15 minute intervals once or twice per hour throughout the first day to minimize swelling and discomfort. After 72 hours heat will relieve the swelling. Swelling is a part of the healing process and can be expected for 3 days to several weeks depending on the nature and extent of the surgery.

### **Your Dietary Needs**

DO NOT try to eat solid foods until the local anesthetic wears off. You will have no feeling in the surrounding area, including your tongue and may unknowingly bite yourself.

DO NOT use a straw when taking in liquids. The sucking action will cause a vacuum in the mouth and may dislodge the body's natural clotting process.

Do take in liquids immediately and prior to taking any pain medications. This will help prevent nausea, an upset stomach and expedite the medication's effects.

A nutritious diet throughout your healing stage is most important to your comfort, temperament, and healing. Hungry people become irritable and less able to deal with discomfort which can follow surgery. Since you will be taking medication, it is important that you are aware that eating can prevent nausea sometimes associated with certain medications.

Milk, along with cooked cereals, scrambled eggs, cottage cheese, and milk toast are recommended for the initial day following surgery.

Soups, broiled fish, stewed chicken, mashed potatoes and cooked vegetables can be added to your diet as your comfort indicates.

Nutriment, Ensure, Sego, and / or yogurt supply excellent added nutrition. These are especially indicated if other soft foods are not taken in.

Please avoid acidic foods such as tomatoes, orange juice and citrus foods, as they may cause discomfort.

**ABOVE ALL, EAT A NUTRITIOUS DIET, WITH SOFT FOODS.**

**Rest**

Resting for the remainder of the day is recommended. The following day you may perform most light non-strenuous activities. Avoid vigorous exercise / activities for the first 72 hours as these may cause bleeding and discomfort at the surgery site and delay the natural healing process.