



# THAMES RIVER FAMILY DENTISTRY

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Ph: (519) 352 – 2200

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY. Sometimes the after effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply to you. Common sense will dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt, follow these guidelines or call us for advice.

### DAY OF SURGERY (FIRST 24 HRS) AND DAYS 2-7

#### **FIRST HOUR**

Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed on the surgical sites, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them for the first 30 minutes unless the bleeding is not being controlled. If active bleeding persists after 30 minutes, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes. The gauze may be changed as necessary and may be dampened for more comfortable positioning. Do not disturb the surgical area today. **NO RINSING, WHATSOEVER, DURING THIS PHASE. DO NOT SMOKE.** Smoking increases the risk of dry socket dramatically.

#### **OOZING/BLEEDING**

It's normal to have your saliva stained with blood for a few days. There may also be some slight oozing. If this persists, place fresh gauze over the area and bite down for 30-60 minutes. Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, it usually means the gauze packs are placed between your teeth and not over the surgical sites. Try to reposition them. If this doesn't work substitute a moistened tea bag wrapped in moist gauze for 30-60 minutes. Do not sleep with gauze in your mouth. When sleeping use an old pillow and place some towels around your head to protect your bedding. If bleeding remains uncontrolled please call us.

#### **SWELLING**

Often there is swelling/bruising associated with oral surgery. Swelling is a normal response to trauma. It is not the same as infection. If you are swollen this does not mean you are infected. You can minimize this by using an ice pack applied to the face adjacent to the surgical site. The ice should be applied in 10-15 minute intervals over a 24-48 hour period. After the first 24-48 hours, stop icing the area. Do not use ice packs while sleeping. Despite icing the area, swelling will still occur. After 48 hours, apply a warm moist compress for 10-15 min of several times a day for balance of the week. Swelling usually increases over a 72 hour period. Therefore you will appear more swollen on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day than the 2<sup>nd</sup> day. After 72 hours, swelling starts to slowly subside and is mostly gone by the 7<sup>th</sup> day.

#### **RINSING**

After the first 24 hours have elapsed you may stop icing the area. At this time start with warm salt water rinse. Place a teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water. Gently swish it around your mouth 2-3 times a day for the next 7-10 days. Do not spit out the rinse. Let it fall out of your mouth. Spitting exerts a force on the healing clot and can slow down healing and promote bleeding. Do not use mouthwash for the first 7 days unless prescribed by the dentist. Also you may brush in the area unaffected by the surgery but leave the surgical areas alone for 7 days. After that you may gently clean around the area although swelling and soreness may not permit you to do so. In time, you will be able to return to proper oral hygiene care.

## **PAIN**

Unfortunately oral surgery is usually accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You may have been given some pain medication prior to the start of your procedure. It is important to follow the instructions with pain medication as it is easier to “stay ahead of the pain rather than trying to catch up to it.” If you take the first pain pill before the local anesthetic has worn off you will be able to manage the discomfort better. Alternate between your prescription pain medication and Ibuprofen on a 3 hour cycle (provided you have no allergy to Ibuprofen).

Ibuprofen>>>3hrs>>>Prescription>>>Ibuprofen>>>Prescription

Follow this until the prescription medication is no longer needed. Continue with the Ibuprofen until no longer needed.

## **INFECTION**

Unless you present with infection you usually don't develop an infection in the first few days. Antibiotics are prescribed to either help prevent infections from developing or to treat an infection that is present. Not all procedures require an antibiotic. There is a decrease in effectiveness of birth control medication when taking antibiotics. Consult your physician for advice on additional birth control measures. Slightly elevated temperature may occur for reasons other than infection. Be sure to drink lots of fluids: 1.5-2 liters /day.

## **DIET**

Soft food is the dietary choice for the first few days. Ice cream, Jell-O, pudding, mashed potatoes, soups, pasta, or baby food are good choices. Avoid foods like nuts, popcorn, and rice as they tend to get stuck in the socket areas. **Also, for the first 2-3 days, eat dark green vegetables, i.e.; spinach, kale, this will promote clotting.** Drinks like ENSURE or BOOST are good supplements as well. **DO NOT USE A STRAW OR DRINK FROM A BOTTLE** for the first 2-3 days. This can exert a force on the blood clot and slow down healing and promote bleeding. Use a spoon or a cup. After the fourth day you can progress to solid foods at your own pace. It is important to eat as you will feel better and heal faster. If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits as much as possible and consult your physician regarding your insulin schedule.

## **STITCHES**

You may have had some stitches placed. They will dissolve on their own in 5-7 days. Not all surgical sites require stitches. If a stitch comes out it is of no concern provided there is no excessive bleeding.

## **SMOKING**

Do not smoke! It is advisable not to smoke for at least 72 hours.

## **REST**

You need to give your body time to heal following surgery. No physical activity is recommended for 1-2 days if the procedure was minor and 5-7 if it was more involved.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have any questions please call our phone number.

**SHOULD YOU BE UNABLE TO REACH THE OFFICE IN AN EMERGENCY, GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM.**