



Post-Operative Instructions: Dental Implants

BLEEDING

Some bleeding is expected immediately following your procedure. Bite down on gauze when you leave the office and check the gauze 30–45 minutes later. If the bleeding has subsided, you may leave the gauze out. If the site is still actively bleeding, replace it with a new piece of gauze (provided to you in your post-op bag) and bite down for another 30 minutes. Please keep in mind that reddish-colored saliva is normal for the first 24–48 hours; however, if there is an excessive amount of blood in the mouth, you should contact the office immediately.

MEDICATIONS

Do not take any medication on an empty stomach. Take over-the-counter (OTC) 600 mg ibuprofen every 6 hours as soon as possible after leaving the office, prior to the numbness wearing off. If you were prescribed a narcotic, use it only if absolutely necessary. If you need to drive or operate machinery during the day, only take OTC medication for pain relief. Please note that narcotic refills will only be processed during office hours.

SWELLING

A certain amount of swelling and possibly bruising of the skin around the jaw area is normal. On the day of your surgery and the following day, you should apply ice against the face: 20 minutes on/20 minutes off. After 48 hours, switch to a warm moist heat on your face 3–4 times a day for 10 minutes. A damp, heated washcloth works well and can be heated to a tolerable temperature in the microwave. Keep your head elevated if lying down.

HYGIENE

Use a soft toothbrush to maintain proper oral hygiene, brushing as you would normally, but carefully avoiding the surgical site(s). Begin rinsing with your prescribed mouthwash (Chlorhexidine Gluconate [Peridex™]) the morning following surgery. Rinse gently for 10–15 seconds, 2–3 times a day (preferably following meals), for 5 days total. If stitches were placed, they are dissolvable and may last up to 2 weeks. Be careful not to disturb the stitches when cleaning your mouth.

ACTIVITY

Restrict your physical activity for the first 24 hours following your surgery. Be sure to elevate your head when lying down. If you had IV sedation, you should not drive a vehicle or operate any machinery for the first 24 hours following surgery.

TOBACCO

Tobacco use is directly related to dental implant failures. Do not smoke or use chewing tobacco following the placement of your implants.

DIET

Remove the gauze before eating and do not skip meals. Begin with a soft diet (applesauce, mashed potatoes, milkshakes, etc.) and advance to more solid foods as tolerated. Do not drink through a straw for the first 48 hours, as this can promote bleeding and delay healing.