

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: DENTAL IMPLANTS

The following will cover important information regarding proper post-surgical care for dental implants. It is important that you follow these instructions carefully to maximize your healing and improve the long-term outcome of your dental implant(s).

Do NOT disturb the wound. Avoid touching the wound or spitting for a few days after surgery. There may be a metal cap called a healing abutment or cuff slightly protruding through the gum tissue.

Diet

On the day of surgery, hot liquids and foods should be avoided when numb. Soft foods and liquids can be consumed safely immediately post-operatively on the day of surgery. Do NOT chew crunchy or chewy foods over the implant(s) until the implant is restored with a crown, often in 4-6 months. Chewing on the implant will cause micromovements and prevent the implant from healing to your jaw bone. Hard foods could also fracture the adjacent teeth. Drink plenty of fluids.

Antibiotics

Antibiotics are often prescribed after an implant procedure to help prevent an infection. If you have been placed on an antibiotic, take it as directed on the prescription until gone. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or any other unfavorable reaction and notify our office immediately.

Bleeding

Some bleeding or redness is normal for 24 hours. You can control excessive bleeding (where your mouth fills up rapidly with blood) by biting on a gauze pad placed directly on the bleeding wound for 30 minutes. Change the gauze every 30 minutes. The bleeding should begin to decrease after 1-2 hours. If bleeding continues, call our office for further instructions.

Pain

Discomfort is normal after dental implants. If you are not allergic or intolerant to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, start taking ibuprofen (also known as Advil® or Motrin®) as instructed by your doctor after your surgery. If you are asthmatic, do not take ibuprofen unless you have tolerated it in the past. Sometimes a narcotic is prescribed for implant procedures. Ibuprofen and your prescribed narcotic may be taken together. Please take your pain medicines with food; this will help prevent nausea. Caution: narcotic pain medicine will impair your judgment and reflexes.

Swelling

Swelling is a normal occurrence after surgery. To minimize swelling, apply an ice pack (or a plastic bag or towel filled with ice) on the cheek in the area of surgery. For the first 48 hours, apply the ice 20 minutes on and off as much as possible. Sleep with your head elevated above your heart for the first two nights.

Oral Hygiene

Manually brushing your teeth and the healing abutments is no problem. **Do not use a Sonicare® or electric flosser around your implant(s) until your surgeon tells you it's safe, usually 4-6 months.** The ultrasonic movements may cause implant integration issues and failure. Be gentle with brushing the surgical areas.

Do not rinse on the day of surgery; it may prolong your bleeding. Begin saltwater rinses the day after surgery and continue for 1 week. Rinse with warm salt water 4-5 times each day. To make saltwater, dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a small glass of warm tap water.

If you have been given a prescription for Peridex oral rinse: Rinse for 30 seconds with 15 mL of Peridex 2 times a day beginning the day after surgery. Use Peridex only during the first 2 weeks of healing. NOTE: Peridex may cause alteration of taste perception during use and may increase staining of teeth with prolonged use over 2 weeks. To avoid this, use Peridex only during the first 2 weeks of the healing process. If taste changes or staining begins, stop the rinse and use salt water instead. Do not eat or drink for 30 minutes after rinsing with Peridex.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: DENTAL IMPLANTS (CONT.)

Exercise

It's okay to lightly exercise the day after your surgery. Unless told otherwise, do not engage in vigorous physical activity or high intensity workouts for 3 days following your surgery. Vigorous physical activity increases your blood pressure, which will cause an increase in swelling, pain, and bleeding. If you are not taking normal nourishment post-operatively, it could weaken your immune system and further limit your ability to exercise.

Smoking and Vaping

Do not smoke or vape for at least a week. Both will increase your bleeding; the nicotine and tar in tobacco impair healing and may cause the implant to fail or become infected.