

Post-Operative Instructions: Dental Implants

- Bleeding may occur for several hours after your procedure. This bleeding can be controlled by placing a rolled up, clean gauze directly over the surgical site and biting firmly. Change the gauze every 45 minutes until there is just a red spot, then leave gauze out.
- A moistened tea bag can be an effective substitute for gauze. Tea contains tannic acid, which helps in the formation of blood clots.
- For swelling, elevate your head approximately 30 degrees with pillows or in a lounge chair. Apply ice packs to the outside of the face, alternating 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off for the first 24 hours. If swelling persists after 24 hours, you may apply moist heat.
- You should drink liquids and eat soft foods for the first 24 hours after surgery, starting 1 hour after leaving. No steaming hot foods for 24 hours after surgery. Hot encourages bleeding.
- **NO smoking, use of straws, vigorous rinsing, spitting, or use of commercial mouthwashes for 48-72 hours.**
- Take your medications as directed. You need to take a pain pill as soon as you arrive home with soft, cool foods. Numbness will usually only last 2–3 hours. The antibiotics are also better tolerated when there is food in your stomach, but you may wait until dinner to start.
- If stitches are used, they are dissolvable and will come out by themselves in 3–10 days.
- You may gently brush your teeth following surgery, but stay away from the open area and stitches for a few days.
- On the FIRST DAY after surgery, begin salt water rinses 2–3 times a day for 5 days. (One teaspoon of salt per 8 ounces of warm water.)
- Remember to keep your mouth as clean as possible during the healing period.

YOU MAY EXPERIENCE

- **Pain:** If you have pain UNRELIEVED by the medication prescribed, call the office. Due to FDA regulations, pain medication can no longer be called in. A written prescription is required.
- **Swelling:** Mild to moderate swelling and bruising is normal after surgery and should subside over the next 3–5 days.
- **Bleeding:** If heavy bleeding occurs holding pressure with gauze contact the office.
- **Stiffness:** This is a normal response to surgery. Exercising your mouth will help.
- **Numbness:** This is a normal reaction to the local anesthesia injected.
- **Implant:** We will see you back in 1-2 weeks after surgery to remove any sutures and to check the surgery site.

IF HEALING ABUTMENT is placed: A small silver cap will be visible in the mouth but will not touch the biting surface of your other teeth. We recommend not chewing anything hard on the abutment if possible.

IF COVER SCREW is placed: The tissue is completely covering the implant and will not be visible.