

## GENERAL POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

Please call the office at (843) 849-5188 at any time if you need assistance after your surgery. Our staff and doctor are on call 24/7, and the office voicemail greeting will provide you with the on call information.

### SEDATED PATIENTS

Patients who have received IV sedation should return home from the office upon discharge and lie down with the head elevated until the effects of the anesthesia have worn off.

- Do not use tools, appliances, or equipment that could be dangerous. **DO NOT DRIVE.**
- Walk slowly and take your time. Sudden changes in position can cause nausea.
- Do not make legal decisions or agreements. No signing contracts or other legally-binding documents.
- Do not drink any alcoholic beverages. This can thin your blood and increase post-operative bleeding.
- It is important to stay hydrated following surgery. You may drink clear liquids (e.g., water, Sprite®, ginger ale, etc.) for the first 24 hours. If these liquids do not make you nauseated, you may proceed to eating soft foods.

### WOUND CARE

Try not to disturb the surgical area today. Continuing biting on gauze for 1-2 hours after surgery, or until the bleeding has stopped. Place fresh gauze every 20-40 minutes, and bite down firmly. Some bleeding is normal, and blood-tinged saliva may be present for 24 hours. If bleeding continues beyond 2 hours, you may bite on a moistened black tea bag for 30 minutes. The tannic acid in the black tea helps to form a clot by contracting blood vessels. Bleeding should not be severe. If bleeding is excessive or persistent, please call our office. Do not continue to use gauze once the bleeding has stopped. Do not drink through a straw or spit.

Swelling is to be expected and usually reaches its maximum in 48 hours. To minimize swelling, cold packs or ice bags can be wrapped in a towel and applied to the face adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied for 20 minutes and then removed for 40 minutes during the first 24 hours after surgery. Tightening of the jaw muscles and bruising may also occur.

Try to keep lips moist with ointment to prevent cracking or chapping.

### HYGIENE

After 36 hours, you may begin warm salt water rinses of your mouth to promote healing. Do not spit, just allow the rinse to fall out of your mouth into the sink. After 7 days of the healing process, you may gently irrigate the bottom wounds using your irrigating syringe, if provided. Use warm salt water in the syringe, place the tip a quarter of the way into the wound, and slowly irrigate until the water is clear. Do not over irrigate or you may prevent the healing process. Use the syringe every day until the wounds are closed. Please refrain from using an electric toothbrush on the surgical sites.

### ACTIVITY

Please plan on resting for at least 2 days after surgery. This is recommended even if you feel well. It is best to take it easy for several days and not exercise or play sports for 1 week. **DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 72 hours after surgery. This may cause dry socket and also slows the healing process.

### DIET

While you are still numb, avoid foods that are hot or that need to be chewed. You can easily burn or bite yourself and be unaware until hours later. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal diet as much as possible, and follow your physician's instructions regarding your insulin. A soft diet should be followed for several days following your procedure.



## GENERAL POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

### MEDICATIONS

Take your medications as prescribed by the doctor. The local anesthetic administered during your surgery normally has a duration of about 2-8 hours. We advise you to take a planned medication within 2 hours of your surgery (before the numbness wears off). Taking the planned medication with food or water will lessen the side effects of nausea or stomach aggravation. If you were prescribed an antibiotic and are currently taking oral contraceptives, you should use an alternate method of birth control.

### ORTHODONTIC APPLIANCES

If you wear orthodontic appliances, replace them within 24-48 hours. Don't be surprised if they are difficult to reinsert.

### DRY SOCKET

A small percentage of extraction patients lose the protective clot or scab and develop inflammation, a condition known as dry socket. This usually occurs on the third to fifth day after surgery. There will be a noticeable, distinct, persistent pain in the jaw area. This may be accompanied by a bad taste in your mouth. If you notice any of these symptoms, please contact the office immediately.

### INFECTION

A small percentage of patients may develop an infection following surgery. This is unlikely to occur, but it is important to call the office if you experience fever, night sweats, or a significant increase of pain or swelling.

### NUMBNESS

Loss of sensation of the lip and chin may occur, usually following lower wisdom teeth removal. This is usually temporary and disappears within the first few weeks. Rarely, some numbness may persist for months due to the close association of the roots of the tooth to the nerve that supplies sensation to these areas described. Please report these symptoms to the office as well.

### SINUS PERFORATION

- **DO NOT** disturb the blood clot in the socket from which the tooth has been removed. This clot is what closed the perforation.
- **DO NOT** blow your nose. This will cause pressure and force the clot out of the socket.
- **AVOID** anything that will cause you to sneeze or cough. If you need to sneeze or cough, do so with your mouth open. This will allow the pressure to go out through your mouth instead of the sinus.
- **DO NOT** be alarmed if you find blood in your nose. This may happen occasionally since the nose is connected directly to the sinus.