



## CARE INSTRUCTIONS: DENTAL IMPLANTS

**Managing Swelling and Discomfort:** It's normal to experience some minimal bleeding, swelling, and discomfort in the hours and days after oral surgery; however, you should see improvement within just a couple of days. You may notice red saliva following your implant procedure. This is normal and will typically resolve within a day of your surgery. If bleeding persists, call us for additional instructions.

Discomfort can often be managed with an over-the-counter pain reliever, such as ibuprofen, that also helps to diminish swelling. Prescription pain medications may be an option. To control swelling, ice can be applied to the area intermittently during the first 24 hours.

Patients may need antibiotics after the implant procedure. It is very important to complete the entire course of antibiotics to minimize the risk of infection and implant failure.

**Eating and Drinking:** You'll want to stick to soft foods and avoid hot liquids and spicy items for a few days following surgery. After 3–4 days, you should be able to return to a normal diet, but avoid biting on hard items in the area of the implant until it is fully healed.

**Oral Care:** Proper oral hygiene is essential to a successful healing process, but you don't want to disrupt healing with overzealous cleaning. On the day of surgery, you may carefully brush and floss around the area, but do not rinse. The following day, you can begin gently rinsing several times a day with a warm salt water solution, especially after eating. After a few days, you may need to clean carefully around the implant and abutment (if attached) using a Q-tip® and an appropriate cleaning solution, rather than a toothbrush.

**Avoid Potential Problems:** One of the two primary reasons implants fail is because of trauma caused by excessive pressure, or biting force, on the implant site. This is why it's important to avoid hard food and try to chew in the area, even if you have a temporary crown. If you suffer from bruxism, a dental appliance such as a bite guard may be required for long-term protection.

Insufficient oral hygiene is another major issue that could impact the long-term success of a dental implant. Immediately after the implant procedure, patients need to follow precise cleaning instructions. You should avoid strenuous activity for a few days after surgery and eliminate smoking for a minimum of 2 weeks.