

PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING PERIODONTAL SURGERY

1. **CARE OF THE MOUTH** - Complete rest for the first 6-12 hours following surgery will reduce discomfort, decrease swelling, and speed healing. Normal activities are usually resumed on the day after surgery but excessive exercise should be avoided for a least 5 – 7 days. Avoid alcohol and smoking for 3-5 days after surgery.
2. **SWELLING** - A slight amount of swelling is not unusual. This can be minimized with the application of an ice pack to the side of your face next to the surgical area. Also, ice chips inside your mouth will assist greatly in minimizing bleeding as well as swelling. Use the ice pack for periods of 15 minutes on and 5 minutes for 3 to six hours following surgery. After 24 hours, the application of a warm, moist dressing will help reduce the swelling. A warm water bottle or a heating pad with a moist towel is sufficient. The swelling may last from 3-5 days, depending upon the difficulty of the surgery.
3. **BLEEDING** - Some bleeding is to be expected. This should be in the form of oozing, rather than frank bleeding. A lot of saliva and a little bleeding can be alarming, but should not be since excess saliva is common after surgery. Minimal rinsing or spitting should be done for the first 24 hours after surgery since this can encourage bleeding. Pressure application for 30 minutes with moist gauze is generally sufficient to stop any bleeding, which might occur. If bleeding is excessive or continuous, please call at once.
4. **ANTIBIOTICS** - If you have been given a prescription for one, please have it filled and take all of the medication according to the instructions you will find on the label. If you should develop diarrhea, nausea, or a skin rash, STOP taking the antibiotic and call our office.
5. **PAIN** -Some pain or discomfort is to be expected following any surgery. You will be given a prescription for an appropriate medication. Please follow the directions on the prescription. Don't take any medications on an empty stomach or you may experience nausea. Do not operate a vehicle or machinery while on prescription pain medications. If you have slight discomfort, but not enough to warrant taking prescribed medications, take two Tylenol or Advil tablets every 4-6 hours.
6. **DRESSINGS** - A periodontal dressing (packing) *may* have been placed around your teeth to protect the surgical area. The dressing is not very strong and can be easily disturbed. We usually remove the dressing after one week; however, if the dressing should become loose before your post-surgical appointment, you may simply remove and discard it.
7. **DIET** - Eating should be avoided for at least one hour following surgery. On the day of surgery it is best to restrict your diet to fluids or very soft foods. Examples of these foods might be milk shakes, cottage cheese, Jello, or high protein liquid supplements. Very hot, cold, and spicy foods may cause discomfort and should be avoided. Meats, vegetables and fresh fruits can be liquified in a blender, avoid the use of straws. Gradually progress to solid foods consistent with what you can manage. Don't skip meals. If you take nourishment regularly, you'll feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal diet and take medication as usual.
8. **ORAL HYGIENE** - You may gently brush the area of the surgical site or merely rinse the first week. You should brush and floss all other teeth as you normally would. You may be given an antiseptic rinse to keep the surgical area plaque free until the sutures are removed and you can resume normal hygiene.
9. **SUTURES** - Any sutures will be removed at the first post-surgical visit 5-10 days following surgery, or will dissolve on their own.
10. **IMPROVEMENT** - After the first 48 hours following surgery you should begin to feel better with each day. If, however, you have questions regarding your progress, please call our office. WE CAN BE REACHED 24 HOURS A DAY AT **650-964-7866**.

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