



## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of the instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification. You have a postoperative appointment scheduled on @ am/pm

### DAY OF SURGERY

**FIRST HOUR:** Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them for the first hour unless the bleeding is not controlled. The packs may be gently removed after one hour. If active bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes. The gauze may then be changed as necessary (typically every 30 to 45 minutes). It is best to moisten the gauze with tap water and loosely fluff for more comfortable positioning.

**EXERCISE CARE:** Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do **NOT** rinse vigorously, suck through a straw, or probe the area with any objects during the first 24 hours. You may brush your teeth gently. **PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 48 hours, since this is very detrimental to healing and may cause a dry socket.

**OOZING:** Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. Place fresh moistened gauze over the surgical areas and bite on the gauze for 30-45 minutes at a time.

**PERSISTENT BLEEDING:** bleeding should never be severe. If so, it usually means that the gauze is being clenched between teeth only and are not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a tea bag (soaked in very hot water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in a moist gauze) for 20 or 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

**SWELLING and BRUISING:** Swelling and occasionally bruising are often associated with oral surgery. It can be minimized by using a cold pack, ice bag or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied twenty minutes on twenty minutes off during the first 24 hours after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed.

**PAIN:** Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication. **IF YOU TAKE THE FIRST PILL BEFORE THE ANESTHETIC HAS WORN OFF, YOU SHOULD BE BETTER ABLE TO MANAGE ANY DISCOMFORT.** Some patients find that stronger pain medicine causes nausea, but if you precede each pain pill with a small amount of food, chances for nausea will be reduced. Remember that the most severe pain is usually within six hours after the local anesthetic wears off after that your need for medicine should lessen.

**NAUSEA:** Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food, and taking the pill with a large volume of water can reduce nausea. Try to keep

taking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications, but call us if you do not feel better. Classic Coca Cola may help with nausea.

**DIET:** Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Avoid extremely hot foods. Do not use a straw for the first few days after surgery. It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc). It is best to avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc, which may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you may gradually progress to solid foods. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are diabetic, maintain your regular eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

**SHARP EDGES:** If you feel something hard or sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you feel the bony walls, which once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small splinters of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

### INSTRUCTION FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

**MOUTH RINSES:** Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use ¼ teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8oz. glass of warm water and gently rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat as often as you like, but at least two or three times daily.

**BRUSHING:** Begin your normal oral hygiene routine one day after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

**HOT APPLICATIONS:** You may apply a warm compress to the skin over the areas of swelling (hot water bottle, hot moist towels, heating pad) for 20 min. on & 20 min. off to help soothe tender areas. This will also help decrease swelling and stiffness.

**HEALING:** Normal healing after tooth extraction should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually some swelling, and possibly bruising. On the third day you should be more comfortable and, although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet.

**The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual with steady improvement.** If you don't see continued improvement, please call our office.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will aid in a smoother recovery, but if you have questions about the progress, please call our office. A 24-hour answering service is available to contact the doctor on call after hours. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern.

### EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

**Dr. Lee's patients** Please call our Office at **404-874-1115**, and you will then be directed to the doctor-on-call. **Dr. Myers' patients** please call **404-892-4039** or **404-245-6739**, if you leave a message your call will be returned promptly.

**When calling the doctor please remember he/she only has your telephone number to identify you by. Therefore, please refresh her/his memory by giving your name and all pertinent information regarding the care provided.**