



Post-Operative Care

Care of the Mouth

- Gauze – Bite on gauze pad placed over surgical site for 15 minutes. After this time, the gauze pad should be removed and discarded and replaced by another gauze pad for 15 minutes. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for 30 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot. This can be repeated several times. Refer to Section on Bleeding.
- Brushing & Flossing – Begin brushing and flossing the areas not operated on the day following surgery. AVOID THE SURGICAL SITES until given specific brushing instructions at your post-operative visit. You may notice a white film over the surgical sites. This is completely normal.
- Mouthwash – If applicable, use the prescribed mouthwash twice daily beginning the morning after surgery until instructed to discontinue.
- Electric Toothbrushes & Water Pik – DO NOT use an electric toothbrush or a Water Pik for at least 6 weeks following surgery.

Eating

- First 24 Hours – Following surgery, your diet should be restricted to COLD LIQUIDS. Dietary Supplements such as Instant Breakfast or Ensure are good choices. AVOID PEROXIDE, ALCOHOL, CARBONATED BEVERAGES AND DRINKING THROUGH A STRAW.
- After 24 Hours – Gradually progress to soft foods such as cooked vegetables, baked fish, tuna, pasta and meatloaf, which are easily chewed and swallowed. DO NOT SKIP MEALS. If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort, and heal faster.

Activities

- Rest – Plan to rest at home the remainder of the day of surgery and the following day. You may read, watch TV or work at your desk at home. When sleeping, elevate your head to decrease swelling.
- After 24 Hours – You may return to normal daily routine, but avoid strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, or exercise programs which elevate your heart rate, for one week following surgery.

Medications

- Pain Medications – take pain medication within one hour after treatment with milk, fruit juice, or a full glass of water. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach. This medication may be repeated every four to six hours as needed for discomfort.

DO NOT USE ASPIRIN or products containing aspirin for one week following surgery. Aspirin, Advil, and Aleve can contribute to bleeding problems. Only the non-aspirin pain reliever such as Tylenol is acceptable.

ANTIBIOTICS – Take prescribed antibiotics as directed until all have been taken. You will begin this medication the day prior to surgery.

SWELLING - Some swelling occurs after surgery. To minimize this, you will be advised to use ice packs. Place the ice pack on the outside of your face, over the treated area for 10 minutes, and then take it off for 10 minutes. Continue to apply ice packs on and off as much as possible the first 24 hours after surgery.

BLEEDING – Slight bleeding or oozing is normal during the first two days following surgery. Saliva washes over the blood clots and dyes the gauze red even after bleeding from the site has actually stopped. To minimize bleeding, sit upright, don't get excited, maintain constant pressure on the gauze or tea bag and avoid exercise. If excessive bleeding occurs, please call our office. If you are not able to reach the office, please go to the nearest emergency room.

SMOKING – DO NO SMOKE for three weeks after surgery. Smoking is detrimental to healing tissues and will affect the results of surgery. If you can stop smoking for three weeks postoperatively, you may as well quit all together.

SUTURES – Sutures, if applicable, will be removed at your post-operative care appointment.