

## **Postsurgical Instructions: *Tooth Extraction***

Care of the mouth after oral surgery has an important effect upon healing. Swelling, discomfort, restricted jaw function, and cheek discoloration is expected, and need not cause alarm. These may be minimized by the following instructions. Please read them carefully. It is strongly urged that they be followed.

### ***Bleeding Control***

- Place a damp, gauze pack over the extraction site and gently bite for 30 minutes.
- Bleeding should be evaluated by looking directly at the extraction site not the gauze. Pink or blood-tinged saliva may be seen for 2-3 days after surgery.
- If bleeding continues, place another gauze pack or a moistened black tea bag over the extraction site and bite firmly for an additional 30 minutes with constant pressure.
- Slight bleeding or oozing is common up to 2-3 days following surgery.
- Do not rinse vigorously, spit, or brush near the extraction site for 24 hours after the procedure. These activities may dislodge the blood clot and cause further bleeding. **Resume brushing after 24 hours.**
- If sutures were placed, they will begin to dissolve and fall out after 3-7 days.

### ***Pain Control***

- The numbing agent will last about 2 to 4 hours after surgery.
- Upon returning home, have a meal of cold liquids/food to ensure you do not take pain medication on an empty stomach.
- Take 400mg of ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) every 6-8 hours for **mild to moderate pain**. Do not exceed 2400 mg of Ibuprofen in 24 hours.
- Alternate 400mg of ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) with 1 tablet of the prescribed narcotic medication every 3 hours for **severe pain**.
- If you cannot take Ibuprofen, please discuss alternatives with your doctor.
- Note that the prescribed hydrocodone/acetaminophen contains Acetaminophen (Tylenol), and thus additional Acetaminophen should be avoided. The maximum dose of Acetaminophen is 4000 mg in 24 hours.
- It is important that you continue to stay ahead of the pain by taking these medications on a schedule. If you get behind on pain medication it takes significantly more medication and time to get the pain back under control.
- If you had anesthesia for surgery, be aware dizziness and drowsiness can occur the first 24 hours.

### ***Swelling Control***

- Apply ice packs to the face for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for the first 24-48 hours
- After 48 hours, apply moist heat to the face to reduce the swelling more quickly. Swelling will usually reach its peak during the first 48-72 hours. Occasionally, facial bruising will develop and could last 7-10 days.
- Assume a semi-upright bed position when sleeping using 2 pillows for the first 48 hours. Expect more facial swelling on the side of your face that you sleep on.

### *Diet*

- Have soft cold foods the first day after surgery and when the numbness wears off switch to very soft food high in protein and vitamins for another few days. Increase your fluid intake.
- **Avoid using straws for 5 days after surgery as this will disrupt healing and can cause a dry socket.**
- Narcotic pain medication (hydrocodone) can cause constipation. This can be alleviated with fiber supplements/stool softeners.

### *Antibiotics*

- Take the prescribed pills as directed until they are gone.
- Irregularity of bowel habits can be caused by antibiotics. If you develop diarrhea stop the antibiotics and call the office.

### *Nausea*

- If you experience nausea, stop taking pain medications and food and wait one hour, then slowly restart clear fluids and soft foods. Advance your diet to more solid foods (nondairy, bland diet) and restart the pain medications.
- If you vomit, wait one hour before eating or taking pain medication.
- If you cannot control your nausea/vomiting, please call our office for additional instructions.

### *Oral Hygiene*

- **Resume brushing your teeth the day after surgery.** You may gently brush the areas near the extraction site.
- Avoid aggressive spitting and any alcohol-based mouthwashes for 1 week after surgery.
- Rinse your mouth with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in a large glass of water) after each meal and at bedtime. Begin this the day after surgery and continue for one week.

### *Physical Exercise*

- Avoid physical activity the day of surgery and for the next 2 post-operative days. You can begin working out 3 days after surgery, but do not expect to perform optimally until 7 days after surgery.
- When you are physically active, you may experience an increase in pain or soreness. If this occurs, discontinue that activity.

### *Smoking*

- Do not to smoke or vape for at least 24 hours after surgery. It is best to avoid smoking for a week as this will help to insure a rapid and uneventful recovery.

### *Allergic Reaction / After Hours Contact*

- If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medication and immediately contact our office.

***Telephone Support 24/7: 360-671-4859***

- Please call our office with any questions. Surgical assistants are available to answer your questions Monday through Friday.
- For after-hours support, we utilize a third party answering service. If they do not answer, leave your name and telephone number. The doctor will return your call immediately. If the doctor does not call back in 20 minutes, please call again.