

POST OPERATIVE CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLANTS AND BONE GRAFTS

BLEEDING

- Bite down gently but firmly and constantly on a folded piece of gauze over the surgical site for 30 minutes hour after your procedure.
- If bleeding persists after 30 minutes, place a new piece of folded gauze over the site for another 30 minutes and repeat as needed. Do NOT change the gauze too frequently as this will pull off the clot and stimulate bleeding.
- It is common to have some mild oozing or spotting for up to 24 to 48 hours.
- If bleeding still persists, bite more firmly on the gauze moistened with water or soaked in strong, regular black tea (which contains tannic acid that helps with clotting) for an additional hour and make sure the gauze is positioned directly over the surgical area.
- If bleeding does not decrease with pressure over time, please call our office immediately.
- Do NOT sleep or eat with gauze in your mouth.
- Keep your head slightly elevated the first day while lying down (head above the heart).

WOUND CARE

- Do not disturb the surgical area for at least 48 hours. Aggressive rinsing, spitting, manipulation, or the use of straws within 48 hours can disturb the clot, open the wound and prolong bleeding which will delay healing.
- Brush your other teeth the night of surgery, staying away from the surgical site(s) for 3 days.
- If bleeding is well controlled after 24 hours, begin rinsing gently with salt water (1/2 tsp of table salt in 8 ounces of warm water) and allow the water to drip into the sink. Rinse gently after all meals and after brushing for 2 weeks.
- If you have been given a prescription mouthwash (Peridex[®]), start using it 24 hours after surgery but only twice daily after brushing. Also brush your tongue as this rinse may temporarily cause brownish staining of the tongue.
- If your surgeon placed a silver healing abutment over the dental implant, begin cleaning the abutment after 24 hours with a Q-tip moistened with tap water and with a small amount of toothpaste. It is important to keep the abutment clean to allow proper healing of the surrounding gum tissue.
- Avoid using a WaterPik[®], electric toothbrush, peroxide, or other OTC mouthwashes for 2 weeks.

DIET

- Be careful of eating and drinking until your local anesthesia has worn off, as you may spill or accidentally bite your lip or tongue.
- For the first 2 days, your diet should be softer, and avoid hot liquids or chewing on the implant or bone graft site.
- After 48 hours, it is usually safe to resume your normal diet but try to avoid chewing on the surgical site for as long as possible.

PREVENTING SWELLING & BRUISING

- Swelling and bruising are normal after oral surgery and may appear worse 2 to 3 days later. This may last up to a week so it is important to prevent swelling as much as possible by icing and limiting your physical activity for 48 hours. Ice early and often.
- Avoid bending, lifting, exercising or other strenuous activity for at least 2 days.
- Apply ice packs to the cheek adjacent to the surgical site (30 minutes on and off, alternating) for 48 hours switching to heat after 48 hours in the same location. Heat is more effective than ice after 48 hours.
- Bruising may be more noticeable 3 or more days later (and be more profound if you're taking aspirin or other blood thinners). It will slowly disappear but sometimes the use of warm compresses in the area will speed up resolution.

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ANTIBIOTICS

- Take all of the antibiotic pills as directed until the prescription is done to prevent infection or bacterial resistance.
- If you are taking birth control pills, you should use a back-up birth control method until your next cycle, as some antibiotics decrease the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.

PREVENTING DISCOMFORT

- Some discomfort is to be expected after oral surgery with the majority of discomfort in the first 48 hours. This should lessen each day.
- BEFORE the local anesthetic is expected to wear off, take an over-the-counter (non-Aspirin) pain reliever such as Tylenol®, Motrin®, Advil®, or Aleve®.
- It's not necessary to fill or take prescription pain medication unless the OTC pain relievers are not helping.
- If you have never taken prescription pain medication, start with a half a pill and take it with food.
- Do NOT drive, operate heavy machinery, drink alcohol or take other sedative medications while taking prescription pain medication.

FOR SOCKET BONE GRAFTS

- Bone grafts are made up of many sand-like particles/granules, some of which may come out during the first week.
- To minimize the amount of bone graft particles that may become dislodged:
 - Do NOT rinse vigorously for 3 to 5 days but begin to rinse gently after 24 hours.
 - Do NOT touch the grafted area as the material is movable during initial healing.
 - Do NOT pull on your lip to examine the surgical site or probe the area with your tongue, or any objects or your fingers. The stitches may loosen and the incision may open which can jeopardize and delay healing.

WEARING YOUR PROSTHESES

- If you wear a "flipper", partial denture, or full denture, keep it out until the bleeding has stopped and your local anesthesia has worn off.
- These prostheses should not touch the gum near the surgical site or the dental implant. If so, it can cause the wound to open or put pressure on or move the implant which is trying to heal.
- If you have questions about the fit, do not wear it until we see you for your follow up visit, or until your dentist has adjusted it.

OTHER

- Do NOT drive, operate heavy machinery, or make important decisions for 24 hours if you have had IV anesthesia.
- Do NOT smoke as it increases the risk of implant failure.
- Do NOT use a straw or drink carbonated liquids for a minimum of 3 days.
- Do NOT stretch your lip or cheek daily to examine the surgical site as this may lead to wound breakdown.
- Keep your lips and corners of your mouth moist with Vaseline® to prevent cracking.
- It may be difficult to chew and open your mouth due to tightness of the jaw muscles. This should disappear within 7 days. A continued soft diet, warm compresses, and OTC pain relievers may be helpful.

POST-OPERATIVE VISITS

- Your doctor will see you 1 to 2 weeks after your implant or bone graft procedure to check on your healing, your hygiene, and possibly to remove sutures.
- Please call the office (781-235-5225) with any questions.