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## **Surgical Post Operative Instructions**

### **Extractions:**

The extraction site is going to be an opening in the gum tissue that will eventually fill in with bone and soft tissue. It may appear like an open hole for several weeks. That is common. You should avoid allowing food to collect in the extraction site by gentle rinsing the area out at night. You should not need to rinse it out multiple times a day in general. Cleaning out extraction sites too frequently may cause a delay in healing by washing away healthy healing tissue along with food debris.

You may have dissolvable sutures to hold the gum tissue in place following surgery. They generally last around 1 week. Please avoid touching the suture to reduce the chance of them coming out too soon.

### **Dental Implants:**

Depending on the location and stability of the implant being placed, your surgeon may opt to cover the implant under the gum tissue. In time, you will return (second stage) and have the implant uncovered and a healing abutment placed so the dentist will have access to restore the dental implant.

If stability is optimal, the second stage procedure can be bypassed, and an attachment (healing abutment) is placed that protrudes through the gum tissue, which will be visible. Once the bone has healed, the restoring dentist will be able to access the implant without the need for further surgery.

A dental crown can be attached to a dental implant once the implant has fused to the bone. This is a process called osseointegration. It takes approximately 4 months or longer for this healing process to take place.

The length of time the bone must heal varies from case to case and will be discussed with your surgeon. The length of time needed for osseointegration is a function of the bone quality, quantity, and implant stability at the time of placement.



Do not chew on the implant area during the first month following the surgery. The implant stability decreases before it increases. Because it gets weaker please avoid the area until instructed at your 1 month follow up appointment

**Bone Graft:**

Your bone graft is made up of many particles. You may find some small granules in your mouth for the first several days. Do not be alarmed by these. The area is over packed to allow for the loss of a small amount of particles. It is normal to have some of them come out of the graft site and into your mouth.

There may be sutures that are there to hold the gums in place and minimize movement during the healing process. Please avoid these with your tongue, fingers, toothbrush or anything else that may disturb the area to allow the tissue to heal. The sutures area generally dissolvable and if they have not dissolved by your 1 month follow up visit they may be removed at that time.

**BLEEDING:**

When you leave the office, you will be biting on a gauze pad to control bleeding. Keep slight pressure on this gauze for at least 30 minutes. Do not change the gauze during this time as it needs to remain undisturbed while a clot forms in the extraction site. After 30 minutes you may remove the gauze; however, if bleeding continues, replace the gauze for an additional 30 minutes. Small amounts of blood in the saliva is normal for the rest of the day after the procedure.

**SMOKING:**

Smoking should be stopped prior to and following surgery. Healing and success of the graft will be substantially reduced by tobacco use.

**PAIN:**

Some discomfort is normal after surgery. To minimize pain, take Tylenol, Advil or similar non-aspirin pain reliever every 4 to 6 hours until bedtime to maintain comfort. Begin taking it before the anesthesia wears off. If prescription pain medicine is prescribed, take it as instructed. Do not exceed the dose on the label. Taking with food or milk will help reduce upset stomach. Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery when taking pain prescriptions. Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications.

**NAUSEA:**

This is most often caused by taking pain medications on an empty stomach. You can reduce nausea by eating soft food prior to taking the medication, as well as drinking a large glass of water with the medication. If nausea medications are given, take them as instructed, being sure to not exceed the dose on the label.

**SWELLING:**

Applying ice or a cold compress covered in a thin towel to the face over the operated area will minimize swelling. Apply for 20 minutes, then remove for 20 minutes for the remainder of the first day. Taking the anti-inflammatory (if you are able) and using soft colder food will also aid in reducing swelling that will occur over the first 3-5 days

**NUMBNESS:**

The local anesthetic will cause numbness for several hours after leaving the office. Be very careful not to bite, chew, pinch or scratch the numb area. This procedure may cause residual numbness or tingling for six weeks or longer which is normal in most cases.

**BRUSHING:**

Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours after surgery. You may then brush your teeth gently, being careful to avoid the surgical area.

**RINSING:**

Avoid all rinsing or swishing for 24 hours after your procedure. After 24 hours you may begin gentle rinsing with a saltwater solution (1/2 teaspoon salt + 8 ounces warm water). Do not use over the counter mouth rinse! You may also be instructed to use a prescription antimicrobial mouth rinse.

**DIET:**

Eat soft foods (see list below) for the first two days. Return to normal balanced meals as soon as you feel comfortable doing so. Be sure to drink plenty of water and avoid alcohol for 2 weeks minimum.

**FOODS TO EAT & DRINK WHILE NUMB:**

Water ▫ Applesauce ▫ Juice ▫ Jell-O ▫ Ice Chips ▫ Yogurt ▫ Pedialyte (pediatrics) ▫ Milkshake (no straw)

**SOFT FOODS WHEN NUMBNESS IS GONE:**

▫ Mashed Potatoes ▫ Pancakes ▫ Pasta ▫ Creamed Cereals ▫ Eggs ▫ Soups (be careful – not too hot) You may increase your diet as tolerated.

**ACTIVITY:**

Following your procedure, rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day. Strenuous activity should be limited during the initial healing period. If you are having pain while doing an activity, stop or reduce the intensity level of the activity to a non-pain producing level.



**ANTIBIOTICS:**

If you were given an antibiotic prescription, take all of them as directed until they are gone.

Remember!

Please do not play with the surgery area with your fingers or tongue

Do not pull up or down on the lip or cheek to look at the area

Do not have someone else look at the area as this could actually tear the sutures damaging the wound.

**PLEASE LEAVE IT ALONE!!**

Avoid extremely hot foods. Cold foods such as ice cream or shakes are OK.

Avoid cleaning the area aggressively. You can take a wet cotton swap and gently clean the site if

a film has developed on the area.

Continue brushing your teeth but stay away from the site with the toothbrush. Let comfort be your guide.

If a partial denture or a flipper was placed in your mouth, you will probably have to have it adjusted to learn how to remove and replace it appropriately. In some cases you will be advised not to wear it during the healing process.

Most times the sutures that are placed need to remain for 2-4 weeks and in some cases, even longer.

**Please notify the office** if you have any of the following symptoms

- Uncontrollable pain
- Excessive or severe bleeding
- Marked fever
- Excessive warm swelling a few days or more following procedure
- Reactions to medications, especially rash, itching or breathing difficulty

Your next appointment is on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm.