

## About Your Oral Surgery

### **Before the Surgery Appointment:**

- Brush and Floss thoroughly.
- Eat a good meal and keep well hydrated.
- Continue to take all medications as directed unless other arrangements are made. -If you smoke, do not smoke for 2 days prior to surgery.
- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing.
- If you are taking an anxiolytic (Valium, Halcion, etc.) you must have an escort to and from appointment.

### **After the Surgery Appointment:**

#### **What To Do**

- Rest, Ice, Compressions, Elevation (RICE)
- Keep a moistened gauze (usually folded in quarters) over the site with light biting pressure as instructed. -Place a cold pack on the skin, 20 minutes on/ 20 minutes off, to reduce the swelling. -Eat soft foods and drink plenty of liquids. To be on the very safe side, for 3 days after the surgery, I advise a diet that can completely dissolve in water, meaning that if enough water is added to the food and stirred, that food would dissolve completely. Examples of this kind of food include protein shakes, seedless smoothies, pureed soups, puddings, powdered potatoes, Jello's, etc. Such a diet is important to make sure the body is not trying to heal around food impurities.
- Take all medications as directed. (every 8 hours means every 8 hours!).
- As directed, keep the site clear of debris with the Monojet syringe provided. Use very light thumb pressure to remove food particles. If no syringe was provided, then there is no need to use one. -You should also rinse with a diluted lukewarm saline solution 2 times per day (mix ½ tsp salt in 8 oz water) for several days after surgery.

#### **What Not To Do**

- Don't do anything that would disrupt the healing at the surgical site i.e, hot foods, crunchy foods, acidic foods, using straws, spitting, excessive rinsing or heavy brushing of adjacent teeth. -Excessive physical activity. Not only is it important to rest, but you also should evaluate your ability to meet your body's nutritional demands for physical activity.
- Smoke. No smoking for 10 days.

### **What to Expect:**

#### **Post Operative Pain**

Some discomfort is normal after surgery. Acute pain usually peaks after the local anesthetic wears off (3 -5 hours after delivery) and remains in the acute phase for 2 days.

#### **Post Operative Swelling**

Peak Swelling occurs 2-4 days after surgery. The amount of swelling varies significantly depending on the location of the oral surgery (more pronounced swelling on lower teeth extractions). Swelling should be gone after 14 days. In addition, your jaw muscles may be sore for a time after the swelling subsides. \*\*If you are experiencing symptoms markedly different than those described above, you may be experiencing symptoms that need attention. Please contact us. You can help your chances of avoiding complications by following the advice above.

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## **Other**

You may experience a slight fever, usually less than 100.4 degrees F and may last for a day or two. Some oozing of blood is normal during the first 24 hours following surgery. Swallowing too much blood can cause nausea, so if blood is pooling in the mouth, spit it out. A tea bag (black tea) can be moistened and placed over the surgical site for 20-30 minutes to stop a small residual bleed. Contact us at (360) 676-0642 if you have concerns about the amount of bleeding. Stitches will dissolve within 3-10 days after surgery unless you have been told otherwise. Remember, you had a surgical procedure done today. Be patient, let the body heal.

## **Implants**

Much of the same recommendations apply to implants as to dental extractions. After the implants are placed, a healing period of 3-6 months is required for the bone to grow into the implant surface. In the first months after placement, avoid hard or tough foods (grape nuts, ice chips, beef jerky, raw vegetables, etc.) as any movement of the implant in the bone negatively affects the prognosis.

**\*\*If there is any question about a food that may be too hard, apply the plastic fork test! If you see a food that looks appetizing, try to cut it with the side of a plastic fork. If you can cut it without breaking the fork, it is soft enough to eat during the healing period.**

## **General Anesthesia**

If you were under GA for your visit, the following recommendations apply. First, it is okay to sleep when you get home. Many people feel exhausted after their procedure. About 3 hours after returning home, patients should start to administer their own pain relief medications. You may need to be woken up to take your first dose. Because nausea is a risk after General Anesthesia, and narcotic pain medications can also cause nausea, we recommend careful adherence to the sections below.

## **Avoiding Nausea with Narcotics**

When it is time to take your first narcotic pain medication after surgery, start with sips of water. After water is tolerated, take an anti-nausea pill if one was prescribed. Wait 15 minutes. Then start with food. Cold and soft foods are advised. The safest foods (but not always appetizing) are foods that will completely dissolve in water (Jello, powdered potatoes, protein shakes, puddings, etc.). Wait another 15 minutes then you may take a dose of the narcotic. Repeat the process of anti-nausea-15 mins-food-15 mins-narcotic each time that narcotic pain medication is desired.

## **OTC pain medications**

Take over the counter (OTC) pain medications as directed as a first measure, unless your personal medical conditions will not allow OTC pain medication. Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) is generally considered the best OTC pain medication for oral surgery. Take 600-800mg ibuprofen every 8 hours. You can take other OTC pain medications concurrently. For example, you may alternate max doses of Ibuprofen and Tylenol every 4 hours. If needed, you may also take narcotic pain medications concurrently if one was prescribed. Keep in mind that most narcotics contain a small amount of Tylenol that should be accounted for in the max daily dosage if also taking OTC Tylenol. Staying ahead of the pain (taking pain medication before the pain returns) has been shown to lessen the total amount of pain medication needed during convalescence. Make a chart and set alarms as needed to track your next dose.

## **Medications**

A confusing part for many people is the varying schedules of different medications. Some medications are taken every 6 hrs., every 8 hrs., and every 4-6 hrs. Keep in mind that strict adherence to medication schedules is most important for the first 3-4 days after surgery. Getting off of the narcotic should be the first goal, as soon as the time is right. Most narcotics have a flexible schedule, meaning that they can be taken 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hrs. (as needed). Taking less and less at increased intervals usually means patients can be off the narcotics in 2-3 days. There are many factors in how patients respond to narcotics, so be sure to consult with your providers if your circumstances require a customized approach to how you manage pain control.

Happy Healing!