

## AFTER SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

A few days after surgery the wound heals to a point where you can function normally. In the meantime, you should follow a few simple rules to promote healing, help prevent complications and to make yourself more comfortable. It is extremely important that you return for all follow up appointments.

### PRESCRIPTIONS:

Medications may be prescribed to help control pain and prevent infection. Take the medications as directed.

1. Pain medication prescribed for you may cause drowsiness and impair your judgment and reflexes, therefore you should refrain from operating any vehicles or machinery while taking such medications and for at least 24 hours after completing such medications. These conditions may be increased by the concomitant use of alcohol or other drugs.
2. Medications prescribed for you may also cause nausea and vomiting. If this occurs, stop taking the medications and inform your doctor.

### PAIN:

Some pain is expected following surgery. Pain medications prescribed for you will help control pain. Take medications only as directed. Do not take medications on an empty stomach unless otherwise indicated.

### DIET:

After the surgery, drink lots of liquids and eat soft nutritious foods. Do not drink alcohol or hot liquids. Advance your diet gradually from a soft diet to a normal diet when it feels comfortable. Do not miss a meal.

### SWELLING:

After surgery some swelling is expected. Swelling will be at its maximum 2-3 days after surgery, then will slowly resolve. You can help reduce swelling by following these instructions.

1. Apply an ice pack to the face, 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours.
2. Start to rinse gently with warm salt water after 24 hours. Rinse 4 to 6 times a day, especially after meals.
3. Apply warm damp towels to the swollen area after 24 hours.

### BLEEDING:

After surgery some bleeding is expected. Remember, a little blood mixed with a lot of saliva may look like a lot of bleeding.

1. Fold a piece of clean gauze into a pad thick enough to bite on. Dampen the pad and place it directly on the bleeding area and maintain firm pressure for up to 1 hour. Repeat if necessary. Remember, pressure will stop bleeding.
2. Do not spit.
3. Do not smoke.
4. Do not use straws.
5. If heavy bleeding occurs or continues, call the doctor.

### ACTIVITY:

After the surgery, a blood clot forms in the area. This clot is part of the normal healing process. It is important to avoid activities that might disturb the clot.

1. Do not smoke for at least 5 days after surgery.
2. Do not spit for at least 5 days after surgery.
3. Do not use a straw for at least 5 days after surgery.
4. Do not rinse your mouth for 24 hours.
5. Limit strenuous activity for at least 5 days after surgery. This will reduce bleeding and help the blood clot to form.
6. If you have persistent pain, or a very foul taste in your mouth, call the doctor.
7. Remember to return for all follow up appointments.