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## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER ORAL SURGERY

1. **Recovery from Intravenous Anesthesia:** Go directly home after your surgery and rest for the remainder of the day and evening. It is best that you not be left alone for the first few hours at home. Please have assistance on getting up and walking today. It is important that you **DO NOT DRIVE** a motorized vehicle until the **DAY AFTER** your surgery. Your activity the day after your surgery can be as tolerated.
2. **Bleeding:** You **SHOULD NOT** rinse, spit or use a straw today. Bleeding can be increased by these activities. It is not uncommon to have some bleeding for a number of hours after your surgery. Bite firmly on the gauze for a half hour. Keep the gauze over the area where the surgery was done. Once the bleeding has stopped or slowed significantly, you may leave the gauze out of your mouth. You may wish to put an old towel over the pillowcase if you lie down. Do not go to bed for the night with gauze in your mouth.
3. **Pain Medication:** Start your pain medication while you are still numb from the local anesthesia. Use the pain medication within the dosage range on the label directions. Reduce or end your pain pill use when you can. If you prefer not to use the prescription drug, you may use ibuprofen. You also may combine ibuprofen with your pain pills so long as recommended dosages are not exceeded. Prescription pain pills can cause drowsiness, dizziness or nausea. If you experience these symptoms, reduce your pain pill use and remain on a clear liquid diet. Call your doctor if you do not improve.
4. **Swelling:** Expect swelling to occur after your surgery. Use a cold pack for the first 24 hours on the outside of your face for 20 minutes at a time. Moist heat can be applied to swollen areas on the second and succeeding days. You will be the most swollen during the second and third day after your surgery. If you have significant swelling or pain four or more days after your surgery, contact Dr. Palm, Dr. Panek, or Dr. Billups.
5. **Diet:** If you have had intravenous anesthesia, start a clear liquid diet for the first one to two hours after arrival at home. Remember not to chew or drink anything hot while you are still numb. Avoid chewing solid foods today. For the next two days, keep your diet soft. By the third and fourth days after your surgery, try to resume a normal diet despite any remaining jaw stiffness.
6. **Antibiotics:** Please begin taking your antibiotic as soon as possible. Take the drug until it is all gone. If you develop rash, itching, or stomach upset, notify your oral surgeon. **NOTE:** Antibiotics may interfere with the actions of birth control pills. Additional contraception is needed for one complete cycle of birth control pills after the course of antibiotics or other medications is completed.
7. **Oral Hygiene:** Continue to brush your teeth as best as possible. If you were given a curved tipped syringe, begin using it the day after your surgery. Use it to rinse over your stitched areas. Your stitches will soften, break and come out on their own within five to ten days after your surgery. We suggest a **DILUTED** mouth-wash solution. Use the syringe 3 times a day until any opening in the gum has healed. This healing may take 3-4 weeks.
8. **Jaw Stiffness:** This can be a normal muscle soreness for the first three to five days after your surgery. If your jaw is very stiff beyond five days, notify your oral surgeon.
9. **Sinus Precautions:** If upper teeth were removed, some slight nose bleeding may occur; avoid nose blowing for three days. If stuffiness or sinus symptoms persist for over a week, notify your oral surgeon.
10. **Remember:** Alcoholic beverages are not permitted within 24 hours of the use of your prescription medications. Do not smoke for one week. Avoid taking the pain pills while at work or before or during activity where you could hurt yourself or someone else.

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It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office where you had your surgery. Please try to call during office hours, however a 24-hour answering service is available for after hours contact with a doctor. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response.

Dr. Palm, Dr. Panek, Dr. Billups, and Staff