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**Patient Self-Care Following Implant Placement Surgery**

**ACTIVITY:** After leaving the dental office today, we suggest you consider relaxing or at least limiting your activity as much as possible for the remainder of the day. Avoid strenuous activity or aerobic exercise for the next 7 days.

**DISCOMFORT:** Some discomfort may be present when the anesthetic wears off. You may have been given a prescription for an anti-inflammatory (NSAID) analgesic. Please take the every 4-6 hours or four times per day for the first three days. This drug will greatly reduce the possibility of post-surgical swelling and pain, and has been shown to accelerate healing. After the first three days, two Tylenol or two Advil taken every 4-6 hours as needed should keep you comfortable. Should intense discomfort occur at any time after the surgery, please take the narcotic medication (if one has been prescribed for you) as directed, or telephone the doctor and he will phone in a narcotic prescription for you. You may take both the narcotic and NSAID together. The analgesic effect will be synergistic.

**INFECTION:** If you have been given an anti-biotic please continue taking it, one tablet every 5-6 hours, or three times per day until all of the tablets have been taken. After a few days, if you notice the pain and swelling are increasing or you are experiencing an elevated temperature, please call the doctor.

**SWELLING:** It is normal for some swelling to occur after surgery, particularly in the lower jaw. To minimize swelling after surgery, apply an ice bag wrapped in a light tea towel or handkerchief to the outside of your face over the operated area. This should be left on your face for about 5 minutes, then removed for 5 minutes, or alternated from side to side between operated areas for 2-3 hours after surgery. The use of both ice and the NSAID analgesic as described above will reduce the amount and duration of facial swelling.

**BLEEDING:** It is common to have slight bleeding for a few hours following surgery. If bleeding persists, apply a tea bag to the surgical site with firm but gentle pressure for 15-20 minutes. Let yourself rest for 15 minutes then repeat the application of the tea bag for a second time if you still have slight bleeding. If excessive bleeding continues, please call our office. Remember, most of the blood you may see in your mouth is actually a little bit of blood mixed with a lot of saliva – blood is a very strong “dye” and a little bit of blood will color your saliva dramatically.

**ORAL HYGIENE:** Brushing and oral hygiene procedures should be done as usual in all untreated areas. In exposed, operated areas, limit your oral hygiene to rinsing with Peridex (Chlorhexidine). That medication will be given to you at your surgery appointment. In areas covered by periodontal dressing, brush only the chewing surface of teeth. Avoid dental flossing in operated areas during the first week following surgery. No undiluted mouthwash or peroxide rinses should be used during the first week following surgery. Also avoid the use of water irrigation devices such as Water-Picks for one month following surgery.

**EATING AND DRINKING:** Do not try to eat until all anesthesia (numbness) has worn off. Maintain a cold liquid diet for the first 24 hours post surgery. High protein foods and liquids are desirable for 3-5 days following surgery. Semi-solid foods may be eaten as long as this may be done comfortably. Eggs, custard, yogurt, pasta, steamed vegetables, casseroles, and cooked cereals are some things that you might consider eating during the first few days following your surgery. Avoid spicy, salty, acidic, or very hot foods and liquids. Also, avoid nuts, chips or other crunchy or fibrous foods which may become caught between your teeth. Please refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages the day of surgery. The following nutritional supplements have been found to aid in surgical healing. Taking the following dosages for at least 4-6 weeks following your surgery can enhance healing:

Multi-vitamin with minerals – take once a day  
Calcium – take 500mg twice daily

Vitamin E – take 400 IU once daily  
Vitamin C – take 1000mg once daily

These nutritional supplements are all over the counter (OTC) items and may be purchased at a drug store, health food store or the health food section of many grocery stores.

**USE OF REMOVABLE DENTAL APPLIANCES:** If you normally wear a removable appliance which replaces missing teeth, and it rests on the operated area where implants have been placed, do not wear this appliance as any pressure on the surgical site could be detrimental to healing of the implants as well as cause discomfort.

**CARE OF THE DENTAL APPLIANCE:** It should be brushed and rinsed when you perform your normal oral hygiene care. If a soft “cushioning” liner has been applied, it is essential that this be checked frequently to see if it is hardening and needs replacement. If it hardens and rests on the implant surgical site, it could be detrimental to healing of the implants.

We want your treatment to provide as positive a healing experience as possible. If you are having any problems or have any questions not covered in these guidelines, please feel free to call us at any time.

**The doctor can be reached after hours at 541-788-1762.**