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Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### TODAY

- MOUTH CARE:** Do not Rinse Mouth, Smoke, or Suck on a straw today; this will help avoid disturbing the surgical site and subsequent loss of the blood clot (dry socket).
- SWELLING:** The nature of oral healing is such that you will have swelling. Apply an ice pack wrapped in a damp towel to your jaw, twenty minutes on, then twenty minutes off for the first 24 hours following surgery. This will help minimize the swelling. (You may use a plastic bag or baggie if you do not have an ice bag). Then change to heat after the first 24 hours. Peak swelling occurs at 48 hours post-op.
- PAIN:** You will have a prescription for the discomfort which usually follows oral surgery. Please take one of the pills as you feel the numbness wearing off. Then follow the instructions as directed. If any other medications have been prescribed, such as an antibiotic, please take as directed.
- BLEEDING:** Keep a gauze pad over the wound, and change it every 1 to 1-1/2 hours. Constant pressure is important, not repeated changing. Most likely you will not need the gauze by bedtime, however, if bleeding is still heavy, place a damp tea bag over the bleeding area (first soak the tea bag in cold water and squeeze it dry). Don't bite down hard, but exert gentle pressure for 30 minutes or longer until bleeding is controlled. Sit upright and remain quietly calm until the bleeding is controlled.
- EATING:** For the first few hours after surgery, drink only clear liquids (Gatorade, broth, jello, tea, etc.) and avoid dairy products to minimize the chance of nausea. Then, eat any nourishing food which can be taken in comfort (noodles, mashed potatoes, etc.) AVOID the use of straws, carbonated drinks and alcoholic beverages, and smoking for 3 days to avoid disturbing the surgical site and loss of the blood clot (dry socket).
- NAUSEA:** Some nausea and vomiting the day of surgery is normal. This may be related to, or a side effect of pain pills. Keeping some liquids in the stomach and lying still after taking pain pills will minimize this. Take only a minimal dose of pain medication, or none at all if vomiting persists. Notify the office however if vomiting is persistent and uncontrolled the next day.

### TOMORROW

- MOUTH RINSE:** Use a solution consisting of one half teaspoon of table salt dissolved in a glass of warm water. Hold the warm solution over the wound area, take 5 minutes to use up the glassful. Repeat after meals and 1 or 2 times between meals. Continue rinses until your 1 week post-op appointment. Toothbrushing should begin as soon as possible.
- HEAT:** Apply heat to any areas of swelling with a heating pad until the swelling subsides (4 or 5 days).

It is our desire that your recovery will be as pleasant as possible, so please do not hesitate to call for advice.

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