

# Periodontal Surgery

## Post-operative Instructions

### ***Antibiotic***

If an antibiotic has been prescribed, start taking it the first day (unless directed otherwise) and use to completion. You can reduce stomach upset by taking it with food and/or plenty of liquid. If you develop a rash or difficulty breathing, discontinue the medication and call our office immediately.

### ***Pain***

Take one pain pill as soon as you can after surgery. It will usually work better if taken before the numbness wears off. After that, take only as needed. Take any narcotic pain pills with food and/or plenty of liquid. Do not drive or operate heavy machinery after taking any narcotic pain pill and do not take them with sleeping pills or alcohol.

### ***Sleep somewhat inclined***

For the first night after the procedure, sleep inclined or with your head propped up with some pillows. If you keep your head above your heart level for the first day, it will significantly cut down on post-operative swelling.

### ***Swelling***

Most people get some swelling and, if they do, it usually happens about 24-48 hours after surgery. Using the ice pack and sleeping inclined as directed above will help a great deal with keeping it to a minimum. The ice pack should be applied to the outside of the face, over the treated area for 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off for a minimum of 3 hours. After 24 hours, swelling can be treated using moist heat in a similar manner.

### ***Oral Hygiene***

Do not brush, floss or use a water pick at the surgical site until instructed to do so by your periodontist. Your usual plaque control methods should be continued in the non-treated areas of your mouth. Starting the day after surgery, rinse your mouth with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in an 8 ounce glass of warm water) 4-5 times per day for 7 days.

### ***Diet***

The importance of a nutritious diet cannot be over stressed. A liquid diet can be used for the first day avoiding anything hot. This should be followed by eating soft foods on the non-treated side of your mouth for the next week. Do not eat such items as popcorn, nuts, seeds or anything hard or crunchy. Consider a nutritional food supplement such as (Ensure, Carnation Instant Breakfast Drink, etc.)

### ***Bleeding***

"Pink" saliva is normal for a few days. If you get any bleeding, first try holding cold water in your mouth (not rinsing) over the surgical site for a few minutes. If bleeding continues, you will need to apply pressure. Wipe the area clean of any "blood clots". It has to be thoroughly cleaned first. Then apply gentle pressure to the cheek and tongue side of the surgical area for 15 minutes with a soaking wet tea bag or a soaking wet gauze pad, etc. Be sure it is soaking wet. If it is not, the clot will stick to it and start bleeding again when you pull it away. You may need to repeat this process a few times.

***Dressing / Bandage***

If a dressing was placed to cover the surgical site, it is not to be disturbed. However, you may brush it very gently with a soft bristle toothbrush. If small pieces of the dressing come off, it is of no concern. If the entire dressing comes off prior to your scheduled post-operative visit, call our office.

***Sutures***

If sutures were placed, they may either be dissolvable or non-dissolvable. Regardless of the material you will still be appointed for a post-operative visit. Any remaining sutures will be removed at that time.

***Smoking*** You are encouraged not to smoke! Smoking and smokeless tobacco may adversely affect healing and may lead to pain and/or a less than optimal result.

***Touching the surgical site***

It is important that the surgical site remains untouched during the initial stages of healing. We recommend that you avoid stretching your mouth to look at the site, use caution when washing your face, and avoid playing with your tongue on the surgical sites.

***Exercise***

Avoid strenuous exercise for the first 7 days. Strenuous physical activity may increase post-operative pain or cause bleeding and swelling. Less activity equals less pain.

***Nightguard***

If you have a nightguard you should wear it during the healing period unless it interferes with the dressing. If so, keep it out until the dressing is removed at your post-operative visit.

***Questions***

If you have any further questions or concerns, our doctors can be reached by calling the office. After hours, we have an answering service that can contact the doctors in an emergency.