

INSTRUCTIONS FOR POST-SURGICAL CARE FOR SURGERY

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING YOUR SURGERY AND UNTIL THE NEXT MORNING

Unless advised otherwise, **go home and rest—even if you feel fine.** The more you move around the slower you might heal. Lie down with your head slightly elevated or sit in a reclining position. **Keep talking to a minimum.**

MEDICATIONS

Take antibiotics and painkillers as prescribed, start the first dose 1 hour prior to your appointment. If you are experiencing an adverse reaction to any of the medications, such as nausea, vomiting, a rash or severe stomach irritation, discontinue the medication and contact us.

ICE THERAPY

Place an ice bag on your face over the surgical area (**10 minutes “on” then 10 minutes “off”**). Be gentle and do not apply pressure to your face. **Ice therapy for only the first 24 hours.** Helpful hint: Use moldable soft ice packs, zip-lock bags with chipped ice or small plastic bags of frozen peas or corn. Do not put the cold plastic directly on your skin: wrap the cold pack in a slightly dampened towel.

CARING FOR SURGICAL SITE

DO NOT PULL YOUR LIP OR CHEEK TO HAVE A LOOK. You will damage the tissue and cause sutures to be ripped out.

Day of surgery: Do not brush or floss the surgically treated areas, just rinse with a cup of warm water mixed with a 1/3 teaspoon of salt. You can gently brush the non-surgical sites.

Day after surgery: Start rinsing 3x/day with ½ an ounce of medicated rinse (Chlorhexidine 0.12%) for 1 minute and then spit out. This rinse will be provided to you after the surgery. **Don't spit forcefully (this will dislodge the clot).** Chlorhexidine adheres to the teeth and gums so please **do not eat, drink or rinse your mouth with water for 30 minutes after.** In all areas of your mouth that were not treated surgically, please continue with your daily self-care procedures (brushing and flossing) as usual.

BLEEDING

For the next few days you will probably notice some sporadic oozing and slight bleeding. This is quite normal. Vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the surgical site following surgery should be avoided. This may initiate bleeding by dislodging the blood clot that has formed.

For patients who have had soft tissue transplanted from the roof of the mouth: It is very normal for the roof of the mouth to ooze more than other areas. If bleeding persists to the extent that it bothers you, moisten a tea bag (not herbal tea) and apply a **firm but gentle non-interrupted pressure against the bleeding site on the palate for 15 minutes.** Repeat, if needed, a second time. ****IF EXCESS BLEEDING CONTINUES, PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE OR YOUR DOCTOR'S CELL FOR AFTER HOURS****

SWELLING AND BRUISING PREVENTION

Swelling around the surgical site is not unusual and will present the day after surgery. The swelling may persist for approximately 2-4 days after surgery. Keeping your head elevated above the level of your heart for the first few days can help minimize swelling. Use extra pillows while sleeping.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

It is recommended that you **do not drink alcohol for 1 week following surgery.** Alcohol can delay wound healing and/or cause increased bleeding. Do not drink alcohol while under the influence of narcotic pain relievers.

NOURISHMENT

Keep a soft **diet for the two weeks after surgery.** No chewing is allowed for 2 weeks.

- Minimize the use of salt. It can cause increased swelling and pain in your mouth.
- Fluids: drink lots of liquid. Increased fluid consumption will counter drug-causing constipation.
- Do **NOT** use any straws
- Put vegetables in low sodium vegetable/chicken broth with some lean meat. For carbohydrates, plain baked potatoes or pasta are excellent sources of energy. If you want to supplement your diet for a few days following surgery, consider nutritionally complete commercially available liquid supplements.

EXERCISE

For the first 2 weeks after surgery, refrain from any strenuous physical activities that would increase your heart rate or cause excess exertion.

SMOKING

DO NOT SMOKE for a minimum of 2 weeks after surgery. Any type or amount of smoking significantly compromises surgical healing and makes you more susceptible to adverse complications including but not limited to infections, graft/implant failure, poor surgical outcomes and prolonged sensitivity/pain.

RETURN TO WORK

It is important that you take adequate time to heal following your surgery. Please note that everyone heals at a different pace. If your job demands physical labor, you should aim to take 10-14 days off. If you do not perform much physical work, however you need to constantly talk, we advise taking 4-5 days off. If you typically sit at a desk and work on a computer, you should be okay to return to work after 2 days.

SUTURES (STITCHES)

Please don't pull your sutures or push on them with your tongue. The sutures will be removed at your 2nd week post-op. However, if they bother you, please call our office.

POST-OP and FOLLOW-UP CARE APPOINTMENTS:

It is **IMPERATIVE** that you attend the post-op appointments based on the recommended schedule. For most surgeries, there will be 2 week and 16 week post-surgical appointments. You need to be available for all appointments before booking your surgery. This allows us to follow up and ensure the best result.

APPLIANCES

Please bring all appliances that you are currently wearing or intending to be wearing (denture, nightguard, retainer) to all of your appointments.

By signing below, I verify that I have read, understand and will comply with the post-op requirements.

Signature of patient, parent or guardian

Printed name of patient, parent or guardian

Patient name if under 18

Date

Signature of witness

Printed name of witness