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Post-Operative Instructions

Day of Surgery:

First Hour: Bite down firmly on the gauze that has been placed over surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. **Leave in place for the first hour**. If bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for <u>another 60 minutes</u>. The gauze may be changed as necessary into the evening in <u>60-minute</u> increments.

Exercise Care: Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do **NOT** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects. You may brush your teeth gently. DO NOT Smoke or Vape for at least 48 hours. This is detrimental to healing and may cause dry socket should you not follow this directive.

Oozing: Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. Bleeding may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the areas and biting firmly on the gauze for 60 minutes at a time. The best way to assess the bleeding is to look directly at the extraction site without the gauze in place. **Do not assess the bleeding by looking at the gauze.**

Persistent Bleeding: Bleeding should never be severe. If so, it usually means that the gauze is being clenched between the teeth and is not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the gauzes. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy, you may have to **substitute a black tea bag (such as Red Rose, Tetley or Salada)** (**only – not flavored or earl gray)** (soaked in cold water, squeezed damp-dry and place inside freezer for 5 minutes) for 60 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call the office.

Swelling: Swelling is often associated with oral surgery. It can be minimized by using a cold pack, ice bag, or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjunct to the surgical area. Maximum swelling is day three.

Pain: Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You may be prescribed a medication for pain. **It is advised to take the first dose before the anesthetic is worn off, this should help manage any discomfort.** Some patients find that stronger pain medication causes nausea. To help lessen the chances it is advised you have a small amount of food before taking any medication. The effects of pain medications are vast among every individual.

If the pain is not relieved by over the counter or pain pills prescribed on the 4th, 5th, or 6th day after the surgery, you may have a "dry socket". Please call the office if you are experiencing pain. Remember that the most severe pain is usually within six hours after the local anesthetic wears off: after that your need for medicine should lessen.

Nausea: Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometime pain medications are the cause. Nausea can be reduced by having a small amount of food prior to taking the pain reliever and drinking a large glass of water. If possible, continue with clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications. If symptoms persist and you are not feeling better, contact the office. Classic Coca Cola may help with nausea.

Diet: For the first day avoid hot liquid/foods and confine the day's intake to a liquid diet or pureed foods. For example, soups (room temperature), puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, ice cream, etc. Avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, and popcorn, which may get lodged in the socket area and cause pain or infection.

Over the next several days you may gradually progress to a soft foods diet. For example: steamed vegetables, fish, tofu, bananas, cottage cheese, avocado, humus, frozen yogurt, mashed potatoes, pasta, macaroni & cheese, eggs -scrambled or soft boiled. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

Sharp Edges: If you feel something hard or sharp in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling bony walls which once supported the extracted tooth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause discomfort, please call the office.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS:

Mouth Rinses: Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use Listerine or ¼ teaspoon of salt dissolved in 8 oz. of warm water and gently rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat as often as you like, but at least two or three times daily.

Brushing: Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every attempt to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

Hot Applications: On the 3rd day post-surgery, you may apply warm compresses to the skin over the areas of swelling (hot water bottle, hot moist towels, heating pad) for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off to help sooth tender areas. This will also help decrease swelling and stiffness.

Healing: Normal healing after tooth extractions should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually some swelling. On the third day you should be more comfortable and although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual, steady improvement. If you are not experiencing continued improvement, please call our office.

At your two week follow up some patients may receive a plastic irrigating syringe. Use it daily according to the instructions until you are certain the tooth socket has closed completely and there is no chance of any food particles lodging in the socket.

It is important to us that your recovery be as pleasant as possible. Following the post-op instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office. We have a 24- hour answering service available to contact the doctor on call after regular business hours. Whenever possible it is best to call during regular business hours, this will provide a faster response to your question or concern.