

## Post-Operative Care Instructions

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### THINGS YOU **SHOULD NOT** DO:

- **DO NOT** smoke for 1 week post operatively. This will most likely cause a dry socket. You may use a nicotine patch.
- **DO NOT** use mouth washes such as Listerine; only use the salt water until completely healed. **Do not** rinse vigorously
- **DO NOT** drink any carbonated beverage, spit or use straws for 3-4 days. If you do this will most likely cause a dry socket
- **DO NOT** lie flat for 48 hours – sleep elevated at no less than a 45-degree angle reclined to help decrease swelling (this could be in a recliner and/or by using extra pillows in bed to elevate yourself from the hips up.)

### THINGS YOU **SHOULD** DO:

- You should pick up your prescribed medication **IMMEDIATELY upon being discharged** from the surgery center, eat a small meal, **and take the medication within approximately one-hour post- surgery starting with the Motrin.** Continue Motrin every 6-8 hours for the first 4-5 days post-surgery. Only use the narcotic if pain is not controlled with the Motrin. **DO NOT** take the narcotic medication unless it is needed. Discontinue if upset stomach occurs, or if you have a contraindication to taking ibuprofen/Motrin. If you have been prescribed an anti-nausea medication, this is an as needed prescription. Any other prescribed medication will need to be taken as directed
- The day of surgery you may eat soft foods only. You may begin chewing more solid foods a week post- surgery.
- 24 hours after surgery begin stretching and rinsing your mouth. Do your stretches in sets of 10, 10 times a day to increase your oral opening. Use salt water only to rinse - 8oz glass of water to 1 tablespoon of salt. **DO NOT** rinse vigorously. Very gently rinse (swirl) and allow rinse to fall out of the mouth. You should rinse at least 3 times daily; including after each meal and before bedtime. Continue salt water rinse for one week or until surgery site is healed. You may start brushing your teeth 24 hours after surgery. Brush very gently around the surgery site.
- Place firm pressure with bite, on the moistened gauze, behind your back teeth or surgery site for an hour at a time. Change gauze every hour until oozing subsides, and then change as needed. This helps to stabilize the blood clot and promote healing. **Gauze should be removed to eat and sleep; replace as needed after eating. Gauze should always be moistened when in use.**
- Apply ice pack to the outside of surgical area 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off for the first 36 hours post operatively. After 36 hours you may switch to moist heat for comfort. Peak swelling usually occurs on the third or fourth post- operative day.

### THINGS YOU **SHOULD EXPECT:**

- You may have varying degrees of discomfort, swelling, bleeding, bad taste, jaw stiffness, mild temperature elevation, and facial discolorations are normal for 2-10 days post-surgery.
- You may experience some numbness or tingling in the week following the procedure. Should this continue longer than a week, please call the office.
- Stitches may come untied or dissolve at different times following surgery; anywhere from day 2 through day 12
- Not all post-operative issues can be resolved over the phone and may require an in person follow up appointment

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **When do I start rinsing with salt water?** You may begin rinsing with salt water 24 hours after surgery. We recommend gently letting the salt water swirl around in your mouth and fall out (no spitting) when done. As listed under things you should do we recommend doing this at least 3 times per day (after meals).
- **How often do I change my gauze?** Every 45-60 minutes until bleeding has stopped. Once the bleeding has stopped you do not need to replace with another gauze. You **SHOULD NOT** sleep, eat or drink with the gauze in your mouth. The proper way to place the gauze was demonstrated prior to discharge.
- **My stitch has come out, is that okay?** Sutures (stitches) can become loose and/or fall out beginning on the day of surgery and continue up to 12 days post operatively.
- **When can I begin to eat "normal" food?** As instructed, we ask that you maintain a softer diet the day of surgery and up to 3 days post operatively. On the 4<sup>th</sup> day you can begin to chew food with the consistency of roast beef/chicken that has been cooked in a crockpot, meatloaf, etc. (foods that are tender). We do not want you chewing or biting on hard or crunchy foods for up to seven days and we recommend avoiding grainy foods such as rice which tend to get in the operative site. You may have been instructed to avoid milk – this strictly means MILK not milk products.
- **Is it normal to still be numb?** If numbness persists longer than a week post operatively, please call our office and we can determine if you need to be seen.
- **Is it normal to still have a "hole" where the tooth was removed?** This is completely normal. It can take several weeks for the surgery site to heal.

## Acknowledgement of receipt of post-operative care instructions

I \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have received a copy of post operative instructions (to include the signs or symptoms of COVID-19 within the next 14 days) and an after hour emergency phone number on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_. I understand that if I lose or misplace this number, I will not be able to reach anyone after hours, and will then seek care at an emergency room of my choice and/or call 911. I have been made fully aware that not all post operative issues can be resolved over the phone and may require an in person follow up appointment.

I fully understand and agree with the above acknowledgement.

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**Signature**

**DATE**

I have received the post operative care packet and have been instructed to call the office prior to use.

The following prescriptions were given to me today and I fully understand the instructions on how to take:

- Amoxicillin/Clindamycin
- Dexamethasone
- Zofran/Phenergan
- Motrin
- Loratab
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Pt. or Caregivers Signature**

**Staff Initials**

**DATE**