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DIPLOMATES OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF PERIODONTOLOGY

PERIODONTAL SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

GAUZE PACK: Any oral gauze pack should be kept under firm pressure for 1 hour or more. This protects the blood clot, which is forming at the treatment site. Interference with clot formations can result in extended post-operative discomfort and delayed healing. If bleeding continues after you have removed the gauze, use the additional gauze from the packet given to you. Fold gauze into a pad, dampen the pad, and then place it directly over the spot that is bleeding and apply pressure by biting firmly for 1 hour. This may need to be repeated. A tea bag with ice cold water may also be used for persistent bleeding.

BLEEDING: Some oozing of blood for up to 48 hours is normal especially after multiple extractions or more extensive surgeries. In the event that you have recurrent bright red blood from the surgical site, use the additional gauze or a tea bag as described above. If bleeding continues, call the office immediately.

RESTRICTIONS: For at least 5-7 days following surgery avoid strenuous physical activity, smoking, sucking and spitting. Sleeping or resting with your head slightly elevated will also decrease the possibility of additional bleeding. Also, try to avoid sleeping on the side where you had surgery.

DIET: You need to continue eating but limit your diet to softer foods for 10-14 days. Refrain from eating popcorn, potato chips, or sharp foods that might injure the surgical area or make it difficult to keep your mouth clean. Return to your normal diet in a minimum of 10 days. Avoid alcohol, mouthwashes, and tobacco products since these substances can significantly delay wound healing.

MEDICATIONS: Take all your medications as instructed. *Ibuprofen (600mg)* is recommended every six hours for the first 2 days. In addition, *Tylenol (1000mg)* may be taken in between ibuprofen doses if needed for discomfort.

ICE PACK: Surgical tooth removal commonly causes some swelling. Intermittent application of ice to the surgical area during the first 12 hours following surgery will help to minimize the swelling. An ice bag may be placed on the skin opposite the surgical site for 15 minutes per hour during waking hours. **DO NOT USE ICE AFTER 24 HOURS FROM THE TIME OF SURGERY.**

RINSES: Beginning the evening of surgery, and for the next 10 days, you should use a sponge swab or cotton ball to disinfect the surgical area with a salt water mix (1 tsp salt in ½ cup of water). Do this after brushing your non-treated teeth, and refrain from aggressive swishing and spitting.

BRUSHING: Sutures may have been placed to aid in healing. Do not brush these areas as you may pull the sutures out while brushing.

STITCHES (SUTURES): Your stitches (if you have them) usually dissolve on their own, or will be removed at your post-operative appointment.

Explanations of Symptoms That May Occur

SWELLING: Swelling of some degree may accompany all oral and maxillofacial surgery procedures; this is part of the healing process. Swelling may begin to appear within hours following the surgical procedure and continue for 24 to 48 hours after which it will begin to diminish slowly. Your doctor may elect to give you medication to inhibit this swelling somewhat. Additionally, you may notice that about 24 hours after you stop taking anti-swelling medication that some rebound swelling may occur. This is normal.

DISCOMFORT: Some discomfort may be expected for approximately 1 week following the surgery. Discomfort increasing in intensity after 3 to 5 days might indicate alveolar osteitis (dry socket). If this occurs please notify our office so that your doctor may examine you.

STIFFNESS: Stiffness of the jaw can also be a normal outcome of oral surgery. This usually subsides by approximately the 5th to 7th day. Jaw exercise may be initiated at that time to hasten its disappearance.

FEVER: There may be a slight temperature elevation for 24 to 48 hours. If this continues, please notify our office.

BRUISES: Bruises occasionally occur on the face as a result of blood pigment in the tissues. This may appear first as swelling and then 2 to 3 days later by discoloring of the face. It will gradually disappear.

SORE THROAT: A slight earache or sore throat may develop.

CHAFFING: The corner of the mouth may become chaffed, and temporary cracking may appear as a result of retraction during surgery.

ALLERGIC REACTION: If you notice you are developing hives, rashes, itching, or difficulty with breathing or swallowing after you taken your medication, stop taking medications and contact our office or your primary care physician immediately. If you have Benadryl handy, take one dose. If you have difficulty breathing, call 911.

Call the office if you experience any post-operative complications.

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