

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### PLEASE READ ALL OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY AND TO THE END

**PAIN:** Take prescription medications only as directed. You can supplement your prescription medications with over-the-counter medications (i.e. Advil, Ibuprofen). Do not take additional acetaminophen (Tylenol) with your prescription medications unless otherwise directed. Do not take pain medications on an empty stomach. Please eat before taking pain medications. Pain levels and pain duration may vary between patients depending on the degree of difficulty of your surgery. Moderate pain may be expected for 3-4 days in most cases.

**SWELLING:** Expect mild to moderate swelling after your surgery. Maximum swelling may occur in 3-5 days then gradually decrease. Apply an external ice pack over swelling for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for most of the first day and as needed for discomfort.

**BLEEDING:** Mild bleeding may be expected for the first 24 hours after your surgery. Gauze packs were placed over your surgical site and should be replaced **ONLY** if you are experiencing profuse bleeding (blood filling the mouth in less than one minute). Remove your gauze upon arriving at home. If you are experiencing excessive bleeding, place another gauze pack directly over your surgical site and apply biting pressure for up to 30 minutes, then remove. Expect the gauze to be blood tinged. If you are still concerned about the bleeding, repeat the gauze packs again. If unable to control excessive bleeding, please call the office for further instructions.

**STITCHES:** Dissolvable stitches were likely used for your surgery. Return to the office for any non-dissolvable suture removal if advised to do so. Expect stitches to remain for 3-10 days. Do not be alarmed if your dissolvable stitches seem to dissolve early.

**NAUSEA:** Overall, the incidence of nausea is low following your surgery. Nausea may be caused by swallowing blood oozing from your surgical site, drug sensitivity or from taking medications on an empty or near-empty stomach. An antacid (Tums, Zantac) may be helpful to neutralize any swallowed blood. Therefore, take all pain medications with some food. Call the office for uncontrollable nausea and vomiting for further instructions.

**DRY SOCKET:** Incidence of dry socket is usually low. A dry socket is the premature loss of a blood clot occupying your extraction site. This loss may be aggravated with smoking, excessive spitting, or aggressive oral rinses. A dry socket usually does not appear prior to 5-7 days after surgery. If you are experiencing pain unrelieved by pain medications, please call the office to schedule a post-operative visit for evaluation. A sedative dressing may need to be placed into the socket if a dry socket is found.

**NUMBNESS:** If your extraction was in close proximity to a nerve, you may experience some temporary or permanent numbness. It may take several days to months for any sensory loss to change. If you are experiencing any numbness after 4 weeks, please schedule an office visit for further evaluation. There is no immediate treatment necessary but feel free to call us if you have concerns.

**IRRIGATING SYRINGE:** Use irrigating syringe as directed after the first week. This will remove food debris collected in the extraction socket. Use warm tap water drawn up into the barrel of the syringe after meals.

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### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

***One of my stitches fell out, should I be concerned?*** No, in most cases the stitches do not need to be replaced. You may experience a gap in the soft tissue where the stitch was located but this should heal without any concern. Some slight bleeding may be expected as the area heals.

***How long will my pain last?*** Pain levels vary from individual to individual. Peak level of discomfort is usually 2-3 days following your procedure. You may require medications for up to 3 weeks. You may supplement your prescription pain medication with Ibuprofen.

***I have numbness on my lower lip or tongue; why did this occur and how long will it last?*** Numbness can occur if your surgery was close to the nerve and can result in a lack of sensation which may be temporary or permanent in nature. Please continue to monitor the affected area for any return of feeling. If your sensation does not return after 4 weeks, please contact us to schedule a post-operative appointment. Further evaluation and treatment may be necessary.

***When can I eat after my surgery?*** We suggest you remain on a soft food diet such as soups, puddings, smoothies and liquids. You may expand your diet to other foods as tolerated. You will be the best judge of what you can or cannot eat.

***When should I remove the gauze in my mouth?*** Please remove the original gauze placed at the time of your surgery upon arriving at your home. Only replace this gauze for excessive bleeding. There will be blood on the original gauze so do not be alarmed. Try to leave the original gauze out of your mouth unless excessive bleeding is noted. Replacing the gauze frequently will aggravate any clot formation and will contribute to further bleeding.

***When can I drive?*** Do not drive while you are taking any prescription narcotic pain medications. Do not drive for 24 hours if you had a general anesthetic or intravenous sedation.

***When can I return to exercising?*** You can return to any exercise routine as tolerated; however, you may wish to postpone any exercise for several days following your surgery. You may experience throbbing or pain at your surgical sites if you return too quickly to your normal exercise routine.