

Periodontal Surgery – Post Operative Instructions to Patients

1. *Immediate Post Operative Steps*

- Apply ice to face over the surgical area (alternating 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off, 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off ...) continue for 6 -12 hours to control swelling. The sooner and more you apply ice, the less swelling and pain you will have.
- Fill prescriptions and begin taking medications as directed (see below).
- Limit your activity to minimal conversation and limited telephone use, light dining and socializing and take it generally easy for 12 to 24 hours.
- No exercise or aerobic activity for 24 to 48 hours. Get plenty of rest.

2. *Care of Mouth – Diet, Rinsing, Brushing*

- Eat a liquid or a soft diet for the first week; chew only on the opposite side of the mouth (of the surgical site) all week.
- Rinse your mouth, including the surgical area, with warm salt water or any mouthwash three to four times daily.
- Do not chew on or brush at or near the surgical area. Clean around the surgical site gently with a few moist Q-tips. You should brush your other teeth normally. Do not disturb the dressing or sutures.

3. *Medication*

- Analgesics - pain management: Both over the counter and prescribed analgesics should be used, separately, as and when needed. It is best to take pain medication before anesthesia (“novocaine”) wears off or when previously taken pain medication dosage seems to be wearing off.
- Take non-prescription pain medications for mild pain or discomfort(Advil and/or Tylenol if ok medically for you *).
 - * Taking 3 Advil and 2 Tylenol together every 4 - 6 hours usually gives very effective, non-narcotic pain relief.
- Take prescription pain medications (typically narcotic) as directed for pain that is more severe and not resolved by Advil and/or Tylenol. These medications, i.e. Vicodin or Hydrocodone, are strong and will help especially during the first 24 to 48 hours if needed.
- Antibiotics and/or Antibacterial Rinses: Sometimes prescribed to protect against infection and aid healing.
 - Take antibiotics exactly as directed, if prescribed, until fully finished.
 - Use prescriptions mouthwash (Peridex), if prescribed, only after the periodontal dressing has been removed. Read and follow Peridex directions carefully (60 second rinse to surgical area followed by one hour without any eating, drinking, rinsing or brushing – twice daily).

4. *Periodontal Dressing*

- Following periodontal surgery, a medicated dressing or bandage may have been placed over your teeth and gums to protect the area as it heals. If it has been placed, do not brush or disturb it. Simply rinse around it with mouthwash or warm salt water. The dressing will be removed at your post operative appointment. Call if the dressing breaks or comes off sooner.

5. *Delayed Post Operative Notes and Steps*

- Your teeth may be sensitive to hot or cold after surgery and should feel better within a few weeks. Avoid cold liquids & foods.
- Food accumulation around the dressing and/or in between teeth is possible and best controlled by not chewing near the surgical site and by frequent warm rinses.
- Swelling typically peaks after 24 hours and subsides within another 48 hours. Bruising of the skin near the surgical site is sometimes seen. Swelling and/or bruising, when seen, are typically localized and limited.

6. *Follow Up*

- Return for a follow-up exam as indicated, probably within a week or two. Healing will occur and dressing and/or sutures will be removed at this time.
- Generally, mild to moderate pain for a few days (that responds to medication and tapers off), some light bleeding over the first 24 hours, limited swelling and bruising and possibly a low grade fever for 24 hours are not unusual or of concern. A greater degree or intensity of any of these or any questions warrants your calling us.

Please call if you have:

fever, excessive pain not controlled by medication or pain that is not improving, swelling that spreads to or includes the eye or neck or throat or under the tongue, bruising that is extreme, bleeding that continues or is heavy or

questions, problems or any unusual medical or dental circumstance.