

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. **BITE ON MOISTENED GAUZE FOR 1 HOUR, THEN REMOVE IT.** If oozing continues, replace the gauze. Do not agitate the surgical area with your fingers or your tongue or by sucking on the wound. No rinsing or spitting for the first day. You may start brushing your teeth the day after surgery and start rinsing with Peridex, if prescribed, or warm salt water (1/2 tsp. salt to 8 oz. warm water) 2-3 times per day for a period of one to two weeks. After surgery, avoid alcoholic beverages for 3 days or while taking pain pills and do not use drinking straws or smoke for 2 weeks.
2. **OBSERVATION:** If you underwent intravenous sedation or general anesthesia, please have a responsible adult with you (eyes on patient) continuously for at least 12 hours following your surgery. During this time, the adult responsible for you should assist you with getting up and down, because light headedness and dizziness can occur. The adult responsible for you should be prepared to call our office should any problems occur.
3. **DIET.** Quality nourishment is very important for recovery and healing. After the gauze is removed, start with clear liquids then advance to juices, smoothies, and yogurt as tolerated. A soft diet (soups, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, steamed vegetables, ice cream for example) is recommended for the first five days, followed by a normal diet thereafter. However, depending on your situation, a soft diet may be recommended for an extended period of time. **Avoid eating hard or crunchy foods (nuts, seeds, popcorn, crusty bread, salads, raw vegetables and dried fruit) or non-soluble seasonings and spices (coarse pepper, bay leaves, etc...) for at least four weeks following your surgery.**
4. **PAIN.** The first 3 days after surgery are usually the most difficult. Thereafter, symptoms usually subside quickly. Numbness begins to wear off anywhere from 1 to 8 hours after surgery. You may start taking your pain medication as soon as you start to feel discomfort. Please follow the directions on the prescription. **DO NOT** operate any vehicle, operate machinery of any kind, or make any important decisions at work or at home while taking narcotic pain medications. **PLEASE NOTE:** Pain pills should not be taken on an empty stomach.
5. **BLEEDING.** Some oozing after surgery is normal and may last up to 24 to 48 hours. However, excessive bleeding should be controlled. Place a gauze pad or a cold moist teabag over the wound. Hold firmly for 30 minutes by closing your teeth together, place a cool gel pack on your face adjacent to the surgical area and elevate your head 45 degrees. If bleeding does not subside, call us for further instructions.
6. **SWELLING.** In order to minimize swelling after surgery, use a **fabric-lined cool/gel pack** on the outside of the face, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off, for 36 hours following surgery. Use of a 3" self-adherent ACE-style bandage, wrapped around the top of the head and under the chin, comes in very handy to keep cool packs in place. 36 hours after surgery, you may apply warm moist compresses to the outside of the face, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the next 48 hours. Maximum swelling usually occurs on post-op day #3.
7. **NAUSEA.** Nausea can occur after surgery. Make sure bleeding is controlled by biting on gauze as instructed. Nausea after oral surgery is most commonly caused by swallowed blood. Clear liquids, clear broth, 7-Up, ginger ale, or tea can help. Prolonged or uncontrolled nausea and vomiting should be reported to the doctor.
8. **MISCELLANEOUS.** Pain in the ear, difficulty opening the jaw, and some local discoloration of the skin can occur with varying severity and frequency. Any symptoms lasting longer than 7 days should be checked by the doctor. Following surgery your jaw will tend to stiffen. To help this, please exercise by opening and closing your jaw periodically throughout the day. Do this after the numbness wears off for 7 – 14 days following your surgery. Occasionally a small piece of bone may work its way out of the tooth removal site. This is often confused for a piece of the tooth left in place. Please have the doctor check the area if any bone fragments cause irritation.

**IF YOU ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY OF ANY KIND DURING THE WORK WEEK, PLEASE CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY DURING WORKING HOURS OR BY 12 NOON ON FRIDAY**  
AFTER HOURS, PLEASE CALL (858) 536-2900 IF YOU NEED FURTHER ASSISTANCE