

CARE FOLLOWING PERIODONTAL SURGERY

Resting on the day of your surgery and following these instructions will help ensure early, comfortable, and complete healing.

1. **DISCOMFORT** – There may be some discomfort following your surgical procedure. To help control the discomfort, please take your pain medications as soon as possible. Eating prior to taking narcotic medications (such as Vicodin or Tylenol with codeine) is important to reduce the chance of nausea. Please avoid taking aspirin or aspirin-containing compounds and take your antibiotic on an empty stomach.
2. **SWELLING** – Swelling may accompany surgery. It may be partially controlled with ice packs applied as soon as possible and continuing the first day. The packs may be applied for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. After 24 hours, warm moist compresses should be applied to help reduce swelling.
3. **BRUISING** – There may be bruising of the face over the surgical area. The bruising will not be permanent and will usually disappear after the first week. Avoid direct sunlight to your face while bruising is present.
4. **BLEEDING** – Slight oozing of blood may occur for the first 24-48 hours. If excessive or continuous bleeding occurs, discontinue any rinsing and avoid exertion. Using a moist gauze pad or a moist tea bag, applied with firm finger pressure to the bleeding area for 10 minutes or more, can usually control prolonged bleeding at home. **WHEN UNCONTROLLED BLEEDING PERSISTS, PLEASE CONTACT US.**
5. **TEMPERATURE** – It is not unusual for patients to experience a slight increase in temperature for the first one to two days following surgery.
6. **RINSING AND BRUSHING** – After 24 hours you may rinse gently with warm salt water or mouthwash; however, people with high blood pressure should avoid salt. Please begin gently brushing after 24 hours, using warm water.
7. **SMOKING** – Please do not smoke, or at least restrict your smoking following surgery, to help improve your healing.
8. **FLUIDS** – Fluid intake is important. It is usually best to start with clear carbonated beverages, such as ginger ale, Seven-Up, or Sprite. Once your stomach has settled, you can advance to other fluids such as water, tea, broth, soups, or juices. Avoid a lot of dairy products at first until your stomach has settled, especially after having received sedation. Avoid hot liquids until the numbness has worn off and the oozing has stopped. It is very important to stay hydrated while healing from surgery, so be sure to drink plenty of fluids. **DO NOT DRINK THROUGH A STRAW.**
9. **DIET** – Diet should usually be limited to soft or semi-soft foods for the first few days. It is important to maintain a good diet. Nourishing cheese, yogurt, soup, ground meat, eggs, etc. Diet supplements such as Meritene, Nutriment, Ensure, etc. may be used for one or two meals. Also avoid spicy or acidic foods.
10. **ACTIVITY** – Keeping your head elevated by sleeping on 2 to 3 pillows for the first week following surgery will minimize and help resolve any swelling. Increase activities as tolerated but avoid very strenuous lifting or exercise the first week. Remember, it is quite common to feel fatigue following surgery.
11. **DRESSING** – A dressing or bandage may be used to cover the surgical area. It is of no concern if small pieces of the dressing break off after a few days unless the area becomes uncomfortable.
12. **SUTURES** – Stitches (sutures) are usually placed when needed to control bleeding, aid in healing and help prevent food from collecting in the surgical site. Non-dissolvable sutures will be removed in 7-14 days post-surgery.
13. **ANTIBIOTICS** – If antibiotics have been prescribed, please take them to completion. If you take birth control pills, you should be aware that birth control pills may become ineffective while on antibiotics and you should use alternative means of birth control.
14. **PALATAL STENT** – A palatal stent may be used to cover/protect the surgical area on your palate from any trauma that may be caused by your tongue, food, etc. It may also help in the healing process. The stent should NOT be taken off for the first 24 hours following surgery. If bleeding occurs, with the stent in bite down on gauze. If bleeding persists, you may take out the stent and lightly apply pressure with WET gauze or a WET tea bag to the surgical area for 10 minutes and replace the stent when bleeding has stopped. After 24 hours wearing the stent is optional. It is important for healing that the stent not be worn at all times to allow the tissue to breath. If you do not have any further surgical treatment you can discard your stent.

A DOCTOR IS ON CALL TO HELP YOU AT ANY TIME.
THE AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY
NUMBER IS (916) 788-1114

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