

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS: DENTAL IMPLANTS

After dental implant surgery, it is important to follow all post-operative instructions & take all medications as instructed.

DAY OF SURGERY:

- Bite on a gauze pad to control bleeding over the area where the dental implant was placed. Keep slight pressure on this gauze for at least 30 minutes to allow time for the clot to form in the extraction socket. If it continues to bleed, bite on another gauze pad for another 30 minutes. Small amounts of blood in the saliva can make your saliva appear quite red. Blood-tinged saliva is normal & may be noticed for 1-2 days following surgery. If bleeding persists, dampen a teabag with water and bite on it for 30 minutes. Cover your pillow w/an old towel to avoid staining your pillowcases.
- Keep your head elevated throughout the day of surgery; this will help minimize swelling. Help to control swelling by applying ice on the cheek at regular intervals (*15 minutes on, 15 minutes off*) throughout waking hours on the day of surgery. Swelling reaches its peak 2-3 days after surgery.
- Rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day. Resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. Do not get up quickly from a sitting or lying position. Remain hydrated with fluids.
- Do not dislodge the blood clot that has formed in the tooth socket – it's necessary for healing.
- Avoid drinking through a straw. Do not rinse your mouth or spit. Swishing, sucking through a straw can dislodge the clot. Keep anything sharp from entering the wound (*crunchy food, toothpicks, eating utensils*).
- Do not smoke. Smoking inhibits the healing process and can cause more pain after surgery.
- Avoid brushing your teeth near the extraction site for the first 72 hours.

Pain:

- Pain following implant surgery is not uncommon. Take 400-600 mg Ibuprofen (*Motrin® or Advil®*) every 6-8 hours (*not to exceed 3200mg/day*), starting while you are still numb, (*so long as you don't have an allergy, & are not taking Plavix or Coumadin*) to help control post-operative pain. If you can't take Ibuprofen, then take 1-2 tablets of regular Tylenol® every 4 hours (*not to exceed 3000mg/day*). Prescription narcotic pain medication is optional and should be taken as instructed. Prevent nausea & vomiting by sipping on ginger ale & 7 Up® and never taking medications on an empty stomach. Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, drink alcohol, or sign important papers when under the influence of prescription pain medications.
- If you were prescribed antibiotics, take them for the specified time period, even if the symptoms go away. Some antibiotics reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills; use alternative birth control methods for 2 months.
- If you break out in a rash or hives, stop taking any prescribed medications and contact our office. Should you experience difficulty breathing, call our office or 911 immediately.

Diet:

- Do not eat anything until the bleeding has stopped. Pudding, Jell-O, yogurt & applesauce are good food choices while you are still numb. Afterwards, select soft foods like pasta, eggs, mashed potatoes, & pancakes.
- Resume your usual diet as soon as you are able, after the first 2 days. Avoid nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, chips which can become lodged in the socket areas until the socket has healed.

DAY AFTER SURGERY UNTIL COMPLETE HEALING:

- Gently rinse your mouth three times a day with warm salt water (*1/2 tsp of salt in 1 cup of water*).
- Brush and floss every day to remove plaque, but be careful not to traumatize the surgical area.
- Avoid brushing near the extraction site for the first 72 hours.
- Avoid eating hard foods (*nuts, candies, ice*).
- You may experience pronunciation difficulties and an increased amount of saliva. Everything should return to normal within a week or two.
- Bruising may appear on the skin. It will disappear after 5-7 days.
- You may have difficulty opening your mouth. Things should return to normal within the week.
- Sutures/stitches will resorb or fall out on their own, unless the doctor has scheduled you for a suture-removal appointment.

CALL OUR OFFICE at _____ 719-654-0105 _____ if you have severe pain that appears to be increasing in severity, excessive or severe bleeding, marked fever, excessive warm swelling, or reactions to medications.