

## POST-SURGICAL EXTRACTION INSTRUCTIONS



### **PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY**

#### **DAY OF SURGERY**

**FIRST HOUR:** Place the gauze packs moistened with water over the surgical areas and bite down firmly. Change the gauze every 30 minutes before they become saturated to prevent the possibility of swallowing blood. Firm, constant pressure will control bleeding.

**EXERCISE CARE:** Do not disturb the surgical area today. **DO NOT** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects or your fingers. You may brush your teeth gently. **DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 5-6 days. This is detrimental to healing and may lead to dry socket. **DO NOT** go to bed with gauze in your mouth. Before you go to bed, remove all gauze from mouth to avoid choking or swallowing.

**OOZING:** Intermittent bleeding or oozing is normal for the first 24 hours. Packs should be removed prior to eating or drinking anything. If bleeding continues, repack the surgical area by placing fresh gauze over the surgical site and biting down firmly for 30-60 minutes. Once bleeding has stopped, gauze packs will not be needed.

**STEADY BLEEDING:** Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, it usually means that the packs are between your teeth rather than exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try positioning fresh moistened packs over the surgical areas. If bleeding continues or becomes heavy, you may substitute by using a black tea bag (soaked in hot water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) for 20-30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

**SWELLING:** Often there is some swelling associated with the surgery. You can reduce this by holding a cold pack or ice bag wrapped in a towel firmly to the face or cheek over the surgical site. This should be applied 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off during the first 24 hours. After 36 hours, it is best to switch from ice to moist heat, placing it to the same areas. The greatest swelling occurs 2-3 days after surgery. After that time it should gradually decrease. Keep head elevated on at least 2 pillows at all times for the first 3 days after surgery.

**BRUISING:** Bruising is highly variable and differs from patient to patient. Some patients experience little to no bruising, others have extensive bruising under the eyes, chin, down the neck and under the tongue. Variables such as age, skin type and medication profile can all affect bruising.

**PAIN:** Unfortunately, most oral surgery procedures cause discomfort. The doctor may prescribe you pain medication. Always have food in your stomach before taking pain medication. Pain medications should be taken within 2 hours after surgery while the numbness from the anesthetic is still in effect. Doing this will best manage discomfort and pain since the most severe discomfort usually occurs within six hours after the numbness wears off. Please take the pain medication exactly as instructed by Dr. Burns. Doing so will help you remain most comfortable and heal faster. If you find that your pain is not well managed after following the instructions given to you, please call our office. Remember that you may only receive refills on medications during normal business hours and on weekdays.

**NAUSEA:** Nausea after surgery may be the result of swallowed blood, pain medications and/or the after effects of anesthesia. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft

food and taking the pill with large volumes of water. If vomiting persists, continue to drink clear fluids and minimize the amount of prescription pain medications.

**DIET:** Do not use straws or drink carbonated beverages for 4-5 days. Avoid hot liquids or foods. The first day's diet should consist of cold, soft foods (pudding, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.). Avoid foods such as nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc. for 4-5 days so that they will not get lodged into the surgical sites. You may work your way up to a soft diet the second day. After the 5<sup>th</sup> day, proceed toward a normal diet as you feel comfortable. If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

**SHARP EDGES:** If you feel something hard or sharp areas in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling a bony wall which once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS**

**MOUTH RINSES:** Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use ¼ teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and gently rinse; taking 5 minutes to use the entire glass. Repeat as often as you would like, but at least two or three times daily until extraction holes are no longer visible.

**BRUSHING:** Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

**APPLICATION OF HEAT:** You may apply warm compresses to the skin over the areas of swelling (hot water bottle, hot moist towels, and heating pad) for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off to help soothe tender areas. This will also help decrease swelling and stiffness of your jaw.

**HEALING:** Normal healing after tooth extractions should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually some swelling. On the third day you should be more comfortable and, although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual, steady improvement with reduced swelling and pain each day. If you don't see continued improvement, please call our office. If you are given a plastic irrigating syringe, DO NOT use it for the first five days. Then use it daily according to the instructions until you are certain the tooth socket has closed completely and that there is no chance food particles lodging in the sockets.

**WHAT ELSE TO EXPECT AFTER HAVING TEETH REMOVED:** Trismus (stiffness) of your jaw muscles may cause difficulty opening your mouth for a period of days. You may have a slight ear ache. A sore throat may develop. Your teeth may ache temporarily. This is called referred pain and will resolve as the extraction areas heal. If the corners of the mouth were stretched during the procedure, they may feel dry and may crack. Keep your lips moist with Chapstick or Vaseline.

**NOTE:** If you do not believe that you are recovering satisfactorily, or for other persistent problems, please call Dr. Devin Burns at (801) 851-0685