

## Post Oral Surgery Instructions

Now that your oral surgery is completed, follow these instructions to make yourself more comfortable, promote healing and help prevent any possible complications.

**First Hour:** Make sure the gauze remains in place. Apply biting pressure on gauze for the first hour-remove and replace if necessary. Maintain pressure until bleeding stops. Do not disturb the gauze or wound with your tongue or fingers.

**When you get home:** One hour after surgery, wash hands thoroughly and remove gauze. Apply an ice bag or cold towel to your cheek or jaw-20 minutes on 20 minutes off until bedtime. Continue in the morning until 24 hours have passed since the surgery. Place a towel on your pillow to prevent blood staining.

**24 hours after surgery:** Dissolve exactly one level teaspoon of salt in an 8 ounce glass of warm water. Allow water to remain in your mouth, but do not rinse vigorously because this may dislodge the blood clot and possibly delay healing. Use the entire glass of solution for rinsing. If wound is in the lower jaw, tilt your head back and to the side. If in the upper jaw, use gentle swishing. Hold it for at least 30 seconds. Rinse with the precise salt solution as described above because this corresponds to the normal saline content of your saliva and promotes cleansing and healing. Rinsing flushes away food particles which may be lodged around the surgery site. In the case of an immediate denture, leave the denture in for the first 24hrs following the surgery.

**Restrictions: For 3 days following your surgery:**

- DO NOT smoke.
- DO NOT spit.
- DO NOT suck through a straw.
- DO NOT consume alcoholic beverages (including mouthwashes such Listerine).
- DO NOT consume carbonated beverages (except as directed for nausea).

**First 3 days:** Gently suck on ice chips or crushed ice. This thins out the saliva, keeps the surgery site cold, and helps reduce swelling. Lie down with your head elevated by one or two pillows and rest as much as possible.

*What do I do in case of...*

**Nausea:** Take one ounce of a carbonated drink, such as ginger ale every four or five hours, or you may use a pinch of baking soda in water. Then drink a mild tea, clear broth and soft foods before resuming your regular diet.

**Oozing:** Some bleeding or oozing is normal. If bleeding continues after you have removed the gauze, it can be controlled by simple pressure. Apply to wound area a roll of gauze or cotton about one inch thick, or large enough so you can apply light pressure when the mouth is closed. Do this for about twenty minutes and repeat if necessary.

**Persistent Bleeding:** Soak small cotton gauze in strong tea and place it firmly on the bleeding area. On top of this place gauze pad and apply pressure by bringing the teeth together. Or simply bite on a moistened tea bag for twenty minutes. Apply an ice bag or cold towel to compress to the cheek and lie down with your head elevated on three pillows.

**Swelling:** After 24 hours if there is swelling or jaw stiffness, apply heat to the outside of your face using a warm, moist dressing. If you use a hot water bottle or heating pad, first coat the skin with petroleum jelly. Then put on a thin towel and apply heat. Do not use heat continuously-only 20 minutes every hour. Or you can use ice packs to control swelling by applying an ice bag or cold towel to your cheek or jaw-20 minutes on 20 minutes off. Cold should be used for the first 24 hrs. following surgery.

**Stiff Jaw:** After 72 hours you may chew gum at intervals to relieve jaw stiffness, especially while applying wet heat on jaw. This helps relax tension and brings relief.

**Sharp Boney Edges:** If you feel something hard when you place your tongue on the surgical site, you may think it is part of the tooth. This is the hard, boney wall which originally supported the tooth. Leave it alone and it will heal nicely.

**Diet:** A nationally balanced diet is very important. During the first 24 hours eat soups and soft foods which are easily chewed or swallowed. Meat, vegetables and fresh fruit can be liquified in a blender. Gradually progress to solid food. Don't skip meals. If you take nourishment regularly, you'll feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. Take any prescribed food supplement as directed. If you are diabetic, maintain your normal diet and take medication as usual. In case of emergency please call.