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Post-Surgical Instructions

Right after Surgery

Remember adequate nutrition is important for proper healing. Drink plenty of liquids (but not hot ones) and eat a balanced diet to help your body recover faster. If you have prolonged or severe discomfort, excessive swelling/bleeding or you experience nausea, vomiting or fever, call your dentist immediately. He will give you exact instructions on how to deal with your condition.

Easing the Discomfort at the Dentist's Office

You will be given an anesthetic to freeze the area of your mouth undergoing treatment. The length of time you experience numbness may vary depending on the amount and type of anesthetic given. While your mouth is numb, be careful not to bite your cheek, lip or tongue. The numbness should subside within a few hours.

At Home

Some degree of discomfort is to be expected after the numbness has worn off. The severity of the discomfort will vary depending on the nature of your operation, as well as your physical activity and general health. Expect to experience the most pain in the first 24-48 hours and some discomfort for 3-5 days after the surgery.

What To Do

1. Take prescribed medication as directed.
2. Inform your dentist of any other medications you may be taking (to prevent a drug interaction)
3. Call your dentist if the discomfort remains unchanged for more than 24 hours.

What Not To Do

1. Do not exceed the recommended dosage of medication
2. Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication.

Stopping The Bleeding At the Dentist's Office

Your dentist will place a gauze pad on the surgical site to limit bleeding and confine the blood while clotting takes place. This gauze pad should be left in place for an hour after leaving your dentist's office. Do not chew on the pad, but continue to apply firm pressure.

At Home

You should expect the surgical site to bleed for the first hour or two after the surgery. It may continue to ooze for up to 24 hours. Do not be alarmed if it looks like you are bleeding excessively—blood and saliva mix together in your mouth making it look as though you're bleeding more than you are. If after 8-10 hours you are unable to control the bleeding using firm pressure, call your dentist.

What To Do

1. Keep firm and constant pressure on the wound by applying a gauze pad (1/2-3/4" in size) to the surgical site and closing your teeth firmly over the pad. Leave the pad in place for an hour, regardless of how soggy it becomes.
Replace the gauze pad with a clean one if bleeding continues
2. Keep firm and constant pressure on the wound by applying a gauze pad (1/2-3/4" in size) to the surgical site and closing your teeth firmly over the pad. Leave the pad in place for an hour, regardless of how soggy it becomes.
3. Replace the gauze pad with a clean one if bleeding continues.
4. Continue to apply constant pressure for another hour.
5. Rest. This slows down your circulation and reduces the bleeding and helps you heal faster.
6. Brush and floss your teeth as usual, but use little water and stay away from the wound.
7. Call your dentist if bleeding continues for more than 8-10 hours.
8. Rinse your mouth gently with warm salt water but **NOT** until 24 hours after surgery. Do this four or five times a day for three or four days.
9. Do not chew on the gauze pad or suck on the surgical site.
10. Do not rinse your mouth within the first 24 hours, even though the bleeding and oozing may leave a bad taste in your mouth.
11. Avoid hot liquids—if you eat soup, let it cool first. Hot liquids increase the circulation in your mouth and can start the bleeding again.
12. Avoid Alcohol and Tobacco---They interfere with the clotting process and increase the possibility of infection.
13. Do not engage in strenuous activity or exercise for 24 hours after surgery.

The Swelling

Your face may swell somewhat in the first 24 hours after oral surgery. Once the swelling starts to subside, bruising may appear. The swelling may last for 5-7 days and the bruising could last up to 10 days after surgery.

What To Do for the swelling

- 1 Apply a cold compress (ice cubes wrapped in a towel or a bag of frozen peas works best) to the swollen area for the first day after surgery.
- 2 Keep the compress there for 10 minutes. Remove for 10 minutes then replace for 10 minutes for the first 6-8 hours after surgery, if possible.
- 3 Put moderate heat (hot water bottle or heating pad wrapped in a towel) on the swollen area on the second day after surgery. This will increase blood circulation and diminish swelling. Be careful not to burn your skin.
- 4 Call the dentist if swelling continues to increase after 48 hours or if swelling does not subside within 7 days after the surgery.

What Not to Do

Do not apply heat to the swollen area in the first 24 hours; this will only make swelling worse.

Relieving a Sore Jaw

After the surgery you may experience tender jaw muscles and difficulty opening your mouth for 5-7 days. Your jaw muscles may have become stiff and sore from holding your mouth open during surgery.

What To Do

1. Massage your jaw muscles gently (if not too tender).
2. Eat food that is easy to chew (like eggs, milk shakes (not through a straw), juices, pasta, bananas etc.)

What Not To Do

1. Do not force your mouth open.
2. Do not chew gum or eat hard/chewy foods.
3. Do not smoke or suck through straws. Avoid any type of suction in the mouth for 48hrs.