

ORAL SURGERY AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Maintain firm pressure on the gauze pads covering the surgical sites for 30 minutes after you leave the office. Some continued bleeding is to be expected. If bleeding is persistent or appears to be excessive, you may replace the gauze as the doctor instructed you. If you do so, remember that the new gauze should be left in place undisturbed for 30 minutes. Remove the gauze before eating or drinking. You may also use a moist tea bag. The tannin in the tea will help control the bleeding.

If you were given a cold pack, place it in the freezer upon arriving home. Re-apply it after about 20 minutes, and then follow a “20 minute-on and 20 minute-off” schedule for 3 to 4 hours. This is to allow the skin surface to re-warm.

You may eat after the initial gauze pads have been removed, but avoid hot food or drink until the numbness of the local anesthetic has worn off. You should eat before you take any of the medications that might have been prescribed – in most cases, a “long lasting” local anesthetic has been used so there is adequate time for you to eat prior to beginning medication for pain. For the first 24 hours after surgery, it might be wise to have only soft foods or liquids (soups, milkshakes, etc **avoid sipping through straws**) and avoid anything extremely hot, extremely cold, spicy or rough (tortilla chips, hard crusty bread).

Oral hygiene is extremely important after oral surgery – it will reduce the risk of infection. It will also promote healing and make you more comfortable. **Do not brush your teeth or rinse/spit until tomorrow.** The morning after surgery, begin rinsing with warm salt water (1 tsp. salt mixed in 8oz glass of lukewarm water), and do so 4-6 times a day, **EVERY DAY UNTIL YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT.** Continue with normal homecare routine - you should brush your teeth. **Continue frequent daily rinsing until your post-operative appointment.**

DO NOT SMOKE FOR AT LEAST 48 HOURS.

Swelling, bruising or discoloration (black and blue) and difficulty opening the mouth are expected. This may be pronounced, especially after extensive surgery such as apicoectomy or the removal of impacted teeth. Swelling usually reaches its maximum 48 hours after surgery and resolves over the next 48 hours.

If medications have been prescribed, take them as instructed. Do not discontinue antibiotics or anti-inflammatory medications without consulting the doctor. If you are uncomfortable, Advil is usually better than Tylenol for alleviating your discomfort. Do not take aspirin for the pain.

Do not hesitate to call the office at any time if you have any questions or problems concerning your post-operative care. The telephone number is 212-685-2476.