



## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLANT PATIENTS**

### **DRESSING (Gauze)**

We have placed a roll of moist gauze over the surgical site and ask that you bite on it with firm but gentle pressure for at least two hours after you leave. The purpose of this is to encourage a thin blood clot to form under the gum where the implants were placed and it is important to the eventual outcome of the procedure.

### **BLEEDING**

Some oozing of blood from the surgical site is normal during the first twenty-four hours, so do not be alarmed if you notice pink streaks in your saliva. If the flow increases and your mouth is filling up with red blood, try to locate the area that it is coming from. Sit quietly, make a new roll of gauze and place it gently over the surgical wound. Bite firmly but gently for at least two hours and don't hesitate to call us at home or office. It is also helpful to sleep with your head elevated by a couple of pillows that first night or two after surgery.

### **SWELLING**

You may experience some swelling of the face or jaw around the surgical area. It may start during the first day or two, last a few days then begin to subside. This is a normal defense mechanism and is no cause for alarm. **To help minimize swelling, place an ice bag on your face outside the surgical area during the first twenty-four hours after the procedure. Leave it on for fifteen minutes, off for fifteen minutes then back on, etc.** After the swelling has reached its peak in a day or two, warm compresses can be applied to speed recovery. Some patients tend to bruise on the cheek or neck adjacent to the surgical area. This is normal and should not alarm you. If swelling or bruising persist and concern you or if you feel you have an infection and fever, do not hesitate to give us a call.

### **ANTIBIOTICS**

If you were prescribed an antibiotic, take it conscientiously as directed until all pills are gone. By stopping in the middle, you can actually do more harm than good.



## **ORAL HYGIENE**

After the first twenty-four hours, it is **important** for all patients to begin gently rinsing warm salt water several times a day, especially after meals. Mix ½ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water.

This is a good time to mention the importance of keeping your mouth movements very subdued and minimal. Exaggerated or prolonged use of your mouth and facial muscles applies tension to the wound, inhibits rapid healing and might increase your discomfort.

## **DIET**

**The importance of a nutritious diet cannot be overemphasized**, especially during this initial healing period when your body is stressed. If you will consume good liquid or soft foods, you will feel better, remain more comfortable and heal faster.

A liquid or blender diet is best for the first meal or two after surgery. Besides soups, milkshakes, sport shakes, Instant Breakfast and blender concoctions, your drug store will have liquid dietary supplements like Ensure, Metracal and Boost. **Avoid hot liquids the first twelve hours after surgery but cold liquids are encouraged.** Smoking and alcoholic beverages are discouraged because of their effect on healing. Soft foods can be added the day after your surgery, or whenever you feel comfortable chewing. Here are some suggestions: eggs (scrambled, quiche, custard, etc.) cooked cereals, pancakes, pasta, noodle casseroles, baked fish, chicken and dumplings, soft breads and ice cream. Vitamin C aids healing so orange juice and tomato juice are excellent. You should also continue with your normal vitamin supplements. Don't let these suggestions limit your own imagination regarding appropriate ways to nourish yourself during these first several days!

## **POST-OPERATIVE VISITS**

At about one week after your surgery we will see you to remove the sutures, cleanse the wound and monitor your healing. All of your post-operative visits are relatively short and you should expect little (if any) discomfort.

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