

# Instructions Following Oral Surgery

## BLEEDING:

Normal oozing may occur for up to 24 hours or more following surgery and is controlled by firm biting pressure on several gauze pads placed over the tooth socket. Keep gauze packs in mouth until you eat. Replace them after eating and keep them in until bedtime. If bleeding is brisk and fills the mouth quickly, call the telephone numbers listed below immediately.

## SWELLING:

Swelling and sometimes bruising are common after surgery. The maximum swelling, pain and jaw stiffness normally occurs 2 or 3 days after surgery. Apply ice packs for 15 minutes on then 15 off until bedtime on the day of the surgery. This will keep swelling to a minimum. Also keep your head elevated until bedtime. Moist heat after 36 hours may help jaw soreness.

## PAIN:

The greatest amount of discomfort is in the first 6 to 8 hours after surgery. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach. Take one pain tablet immediately after you receive your prescription along with a glass of 7 UP then another tablet one hour later. If itching or a rash develops, stop taking all medications and contact the office or emergency number listed below immediately. If a dull pain along with an earache increases on the 3rd or 4th day, call the office to have it checked.

## MUSCLE SORENESS:

Difficulty in opening the jaws is common after third molar extractions. Chewing gum at intervals will help with muscle soreness along with moist heat after 36 hours.

## MOUTH CARE:

No rinsing or smoking for 24 hours following surgery. The day after surgery, rinse with a glass of warm water mixed with one teaspoon of salt five times a day for at least one week. Brush and floss as usual but avoid the surgical sites. The corners of your mouth may dry and crack so keep them moist with Vaseline.

## DIET:

It is important to maintain good nutrition following surgery. Eat a lukewarm soft diet the day of surgery. Do not drink through a straw. Eat whatever you can the day after surgery but stay away from hard, chewy foods. Drink plenty of fluids.

## INFECTION:

Infection following surgery is rare but if swelling and discomfort worsens after the 4th day following surgery along with a foul taste, fever and difficulty swallowing, contact the office or emergency number immediately.

## TEA BAGS:

Tea bags are useful to control bleeding at home. If bleeding seems to be excessive at home tonight, wet a tea bag with warm water and place it over the bleeding area, bite down firmly for one to two hours and bleeding should stop.

## POPCORN:

Do not eat popcorn, peanuts, nuts, chips or other small hard food for 6 weeks.