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HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER SURGERY

Immediately following surgery, return home and relax. You may return to work or regular activities tomorrow, but it is not advisable to perform any strenuous activities during the first post-operative week.

If you had **intravenous sedation**, you will feel groggy for up to 24 hours. It is critical that you do not drive, operate heavy machinery, make critical decisions or consume alcohol during this period.

While lips and/or tongue are numb, do not bite them or push any protective dressing that may be present. Do not pull back the lips to observe the surgical site as it puts undue pressure on the gums, which are trying to heal.

Generally, the most uncomfortable time is when the numbing wears off. It is recommended that you take the pain medication as soon as possible, before you start to hurt (i.e. while you are still feeling numb)

If you had a **graft surgery**, there may be histacryl (dental glue) where the new tissue was placed. It is normal for this glue to be white or gray in appearance. After several days, this glue, along with the superficial layer of skin cells, may slough off. This is normal; however, do not pick at the area to help the glue come off. Allow the glue to come off in its own time. There is no harm to you if it is swallowed accidentally.

MEDICATION: Take all medications as prescribed. If pain medications are prescribed, ensure you take them as directed; they are prescribed to minimize your discomfort during the healing phase. If antibiotics are prescribed, take them as directed until all have been taken. Discontinue antibiotics in case of rash, itching or upset stomach and advise the office. After finishing the antibiotics, drink buttermilk or eat yogurt for 3-4 days to restore good intestinal bacteria. All medication should be taken after eating to prevent nausea. If a mouth rinse was prescribed, start using it only 24 hours after your surgery.

BLEEDING: A moderate amount of bleeding or oozing can be expected during the first 2 days after the surgery. To control bleeding, place a gauze on the area and apply a gentle pressure. It is not unusual to have some minor bleeding during the first 24 hours. The blood mixes with saliva and there may therefore appear to be more blood than it really is. If bleeding persists or increases in severity, apply firm pressure directly to the site of the bleeding with moist gauze or a wet tea bag. **Pressure should be applied continually for 20 minutes.** It also helps to lie down with your head raised on a pillow. If bleeding still persists, contact Dr. Oakley.

ICE PACKS: Ice packs should be applied during the first 12 hours following the surgery and may be used up to 2 days after the surgery. Apply ice packs 20 minutes 'on' and 20 minutes 'off'. Ice packs must be wrapped in a thin cloth and applied on the outside of the jaw or cheeks over the surgical site.

SWELLING: Swelling is common and may peak 3 days after the surgery. Applying ice packs immediately following the surgery will help in reducing the swelling. **Bruising may appear with the swelling** but will gradually disappear within 7 to 10 days. It is also recommended you sleep with your head elevated at about 45 degrees for the first 2-3 days following your surgery to reduce swelling. If swelling does not reduce or increases 5 days after your surgery and you experience excessive pain, call the office.

RINSING & BRUSHING: Brushing: Avoid brushing or flossing the surgical site until you are seen for your first post-operative visit. You should however brush and floss your other teeth normally. You may rinse your mouth each time after eating by using a ½ teaspoon of salt dissolved in a glass of warm water. If you were prescribed Peridex, remember to rinse with this twice a day. Do not swish when rinsing your mouth; instead, slightly lower and gently move your head right to left. Do not spit out water, but let it drain out in the sink.

STITCHES: Stitches (if present) will dissolve in approximately 7-10 days. They may come loose or fall out before your first post-operative visit. As long as there is no continuous bleeding, discomfort or pain, this is not a cause for concern. If you had a dental implant placed and the stitches fall out, advise the office. Never attempt to remove a stitch on your own.

NUTRITION: During the first 24 hours following your surgery, avoid hot fluids (tea, coffee, hot soup) and also avoid chewing on food. Limit yourself to a soft diet such as pudding, Jell-O, yogurt, applesauce, scrambled eggs, mashed bananas and overcooked pasta. Liquid supplements such as Ensure, Boost and Carnation Instant Breakfast are also excellent. Increase your nutrition gradually but avoid hard to chew foods until your first post-operative visit. Drink plenty of fluids and do not use straws.

ACTIVITIES: During the next 5 days following your surgery, it is not advisable to go to the gym, participate in sporting activities, swim, lift and/or push heavy objects. It is recommended that you **do not perform any strenuous physical activities** during your recovery period.

SMOKING: Smoking seriously impairs the healing process and increases the risk of infection in your mouth. Avoid smoking during the first 7 days following your surgery. Reduce smoking as much as possible to ensure proper healing.

ON YOUR FIRST POST-OPERATIVE VISIT: Remember to bring any dentures, night guards or other oral prostheses so that your periodontist can evaluate proper fit.

IN THE EVENT OF ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE. IN THE EVENT OF EMERGENCY PLEASE CALL DR. OAKLEY
AT 410 459 4046