

INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

Complete rest for the next 48 hours will help ensure early, comfortable and complete healing. Depending on the complexity of your surgery, we may advise a longer rest period. Restrict your activity to light duty for 5 days after the 48 hour resting period. Return to your normal level of activity gradually over a 14 day period following your surgery.

MEDICATIONS -----

You may have received a prescription for any of the following: pain medication, an anti-inflammatory, an antibiotic and/or an oral rinse. Start the antibiotic within 2 hours of the surgery, if prescribed, take the antibiotic until finished unless a problem arises (allergic reaction or significant discomfort) in which case, stop taking the antibiotic and **contact our office**. Start the oral rinse the day following the surgery.

COMFORT-----

Pain is a normal response that the body produces after any surgical procedure. The local anesthetic (freezing) administered during your surgery will probably last from 4-6 hours. Take the prescribed pain medication as directed before the freezing wears off. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE PAIN IS NO LONGER TOLERABLE.** Please take pain medication within two hours of the surgery. Use the prescribed pain medication, until the post operative pain dissipates. The pain usually peaks in 24-48 hours. On the third day we expect the pain to level off and gradually start getting better. A sudden increase in pain on the fourth day or later may indicate the presence of infection, dry socket or other complication. Call the office to schedule a follow up appointment or present during sick parade.

PLEASE NOTE:

Pain medications taken on an empty stomach can result in an unsettled feeling and/or nausea and vomiting. This can also be caused by blood in the stomach. Please take food or fluids before your pain tablets. For nausea you should take Gravol, which can be acquired at a pharmacy (suppositories are preferable if you are very nauseated or vomiting).

CONTROL OF POST-OPERATIVE BLEEDING-----

It is normal to bleed or ooze for some time following oral surgery. It is normal to have blood on the gauze during the day and night of the surgery. You may notice blood on the pillow or in the saliva for 3-4 days after the surgery. To prevent stains on linen place a dark colored towel on your pillow.

To control bleeding gauze should be placed directly over the surgical site and firm pressure applied. **DO NOT REMOVE OR DISTURB THE GAUZE OVER THE SURGICAL SITE FOR 1 HOUR** immediately following the surgery. If bleeding continues or reoccurs, place moist gauze over the surgical site and bite to create firm constant pressure for 2 hours. It is important to rest with your head elevated 30 degrees or more. If you do not have any gauze, a regular tea bag moistened and placed over the site can be used. Do not chew on the gauze or tea bag; a constant firm pressure is most effective in controlling the bleeding. Following the removal of wisdom teeth, fold the gauze and place it **directly behind** the last molar tooth. If the gauze is between your teeth and not behind the molar teeth, the gauze will be completely ineffective.

SWELLING AND STIFFNESS-----

Swelling and stiffness occurs following the extraction of teeth and other oral surgery procedures. Swelling and stiffness aid the healing process by splinting and resting the surgery area. The swelling is at it's maximum on the third day. In order to help minimize the swelling, apply ice packs for the first 24-48 hours alternating ice, on and off, 30 minutes at a time during waking hours. By the third day the swelling should have peaked and cold will not be effective. A gentle massage with a hot face cloth should be used 15 minutes every waking hour for the next 2-3 days. The swelling normally disappears in about a week. Swelling that continues to increase beyond the fourth day after surgery may indicate the presence of an infection.

You may feel quite ill and have an elevated temperature. Should this occur please contact our office.

A slight post-operative temperature elevation (for 2-3 days) is normal following surgery. Careful attention to oral hygiene will greatly reduce the possibility of infection. Return of normal jaw movement may take up to 3 weeks; during which time we recommend jaw exercises to reduce stiffness. These should start the day after surgery.

DISCOLOURATION OF THE SKIN-----

Bruising of the facial tissues following oral surgery is not uncommon. The bruising may occur within the first 3-5 days and may appear dark purple to a greenish yellow colour. The bruising occasionally migrates into the neck or upper chest area and normally will disappear in 7-10 days. Gentle massage with a warm face cloth for fifteen minutes each waking hour will aid in a gradually return to normal.

DIET AND NUTRITION-----

Following oral surgery, your body requires adequate fluids and nourishment. While your jaw is frozen, drink only liquids (preferably room temperature), or foods that require no chewing such as Jell-O, pudding, yogurt, bananas, applesauce, or juice without pulp. You should be drinking 2-3 liters of water a day for the first few days. Start with a soft diet...pasta, eggs, ground meat, casseroles, cottage cheese, cooked vegetables, fish, chicken. A gradual return to your regular diet, as you are able to tolerate, is recommended. Avoid foods that break down into hard crunchy bits...chips, popcorn, nachos, pretzels, wholegrain or crusty breads, seeds, nuts and raw vegetables. These foods are easily lodged in the sockets, and are very difficult to rinse out, possibly causing infection. Avoid these foods for 6-8 weeks.

SMOKING-----

Smoking is discouraged during the healing period (2-4 weeks). The first 5 days following the surgery are critical. Smoke is a tissue irritant and will retard healing. It can increase post-operative bleeding

and lead to increased risk of infection and dry sockets.

DRY SOCKET-----

A dry socket occurs if there is not enough quantity or quality of blood in the socket to cover the bone exposed by the extraction. It most frequently happens with lower wisdom teeth. Dry socket presents as increasing discomfort, usually throbbing pain after 3-5 days. Pain medication does not alleviate the discomfort completely. The problem can be easily treated by revisiting our office. Contact the dental office to arrange treatment.

SUTURES-----

Self-dissolving sutures are routinely used and will release or dissolve in 4-10 days. Loose sutures can be gently removed with tweezers or the long ends carefully trimmed.

ORAL HYGIENE-----

PROPER ORAL HYGIENE IS ESSENTIAL TO REDUCE INFECTION AND PROMOTE HEALING.

Start rinsing the day following surgery. If you have been prescribed the mouth rinse (Chlorhexidine) follow the instructions on the bottle and **DO NOT RINSE WITH SALT WATER AS DESCRIBED BELOW.** If you have not been prescribed a chlorhexidine mouth rinse, then follow the rinsing instructions below.

Rinse frequently (4-6 times/day), including first thing in the morning, following all meals, and before you go to bed.

Gently rinse with warm salt water (1 tsp. salt to a cup of water). If a syringe has been provided, you may fill it with rinse solution, place it directly over the surgical sites and flush the area as necessary. You may notice food debris washed from the sites for a period. This is normal. If you have had wisdom teeth (third molars) extracted you may use the syringe after meals to flush the lower sockets if debris appears to be collecting.

Being gentle around surgical site(s), resume brushing and flossing the day after surgery.

TEMPORARY NUMBNESS OR TINGLING IN THE LIP OR TONGUE-----

Occasionally, due to the position of some impacted teeth, sensory nerves supplying the lip or tongue are involved. Numbness, tingling or an altered sensation in the lower lip and/or tongue can occur requiring several weeks, months or even up to one year for normal function to return. In extremely rare situations, normal sensation does not return.

INFECTION-----

Infection may occur shortly after the surgery or 4-6 weeks afterwards. Infections that occur shortly after the surgery are due to infection present at the time of extraction. You may feel sick and find it difficult to swallow. Usually only antibiotic medication is required and must be taken as directed until all the medication is gone. Antibiotics may take up to 2 days to reduce the effects of the infection. In some cases when the infection builds up quickly, a second surgery will be required to drain the infection. Infections may also occur 4-6 weeks following the surgery due to contamination of the extraction site with food debris during healing or due to small pieces of tooth or bone left after surgery. You will generally experience pressure, swelling and sometimes pain. Treatment can include draining the infection from the area.

TOOTH/BONE FRACTURES-----

Teeth may require sectioning, or division into smaller pieces to allow for removal. Small pieces of tooth or bone may be left and your body attempts to "push" these pieces out. You may feel sharp spots in your gum afterwards for several days. If this occurs you should contact our office. In some cases, your body is unable to "push" out larger pieces and they require removal.

SINUS PERFORATION-----

The roots of the upper teeth frequently help to provide support for the floor of the maxillary sinus.

Removing upper teeth can weaken the sinus floor. Anything that creates pressure in the sinus may cause a rupture in the sinus membrane, or skin, with a resultant opening between the sinus and the mouth (blowing nose, sucking on a straw, or sneezing). An opening into the sinus allows anything you eat or drink to contaminate the sinus and possibly cause an infection. You may notice pressure or a feeling similar to a "sinus cold". Fluid or blood may come from your nose when you eat or drink. Medication, gauze packing or another surgical procedure may be necessary to close the opening.



A FEW THINGS THAT MUST BE NOTED

Your escort must remain with you for at least 6 hours following your surgery. If you are still sedated your escort may be required for a longer period of time.

ABSOLUTELY NO driving and no operation of any machinery for 24 hours following surgery.

ABSOLUTELY NO tobacco, alcohol or recreational drugs for two weeks following surgery, or as long **as you're taking prescription medications**

LEIGH SMILE CENTER

Instructions Following Oral Surgery

**Dr. Tim Barter
DDS**

Careful review of the instructions and information in this pamphlet will ensure that you experience an uncomplicated and complete recovery .

780-862-3368

OFFICE: 780-349-6700