

## Surgery Post-Operative Instructions

### RECOVERY CONSIDERATIONS:

The first stage of healing is the most challenging; however, it only consists of the first 1 to 3 days after your procedure. You may experience varying degrees of tenderness, swelling, sensitivity, and/or discomfort.

After the initial days, the second stage of recovery will allow for a decrease of the swelling, tenderness, and discomfort. Please note these time periods are approximate and will vary depending on the patient, complexity of the procedure, pre-existing medical problems, and medications being taken on a daily basis. Though you may feel well the day after surgery, we strongly encourage you to reduce your activity level for the first 3 to 5 days—especially for the first 48 hours.

Avoid:

- Exerting yourself
- Exercising
- Crunchy food
- Carbonated drinks

If you exercise on a frequent basis, please refrain from these events for a couple of days. During exercise, the blood pressure and pulse may increase and cause increased pain or swelling. Any unusual condition occurring after being dismissed should be brought to the Doctor's attention and not be neglected. We prioritize your recovery and want it to be as smooth and pleasant as possible, and following these instructions will assist you during this process.

### 1st Hour Post-Op

Your lip, tongue, and cheek may be numb, so please be careful to avoid injuring these areas when biting down on gauze, or when eating and talking. If your procedure was done with IV sedation, **someone has to stay with you for the following 24 hours**. No working, driving, operating heavy machinery, making any important decisions, or being responsible for watching or holding children for the first 24 hours after. You may ice the surgical area for the first 2 days to ease tenderness and prevent swelling.

### 1st-5th Days of Care

It is imperative you do not disturb the surgical area: DO NOT probe the area with any objects or your fingers. You may brush your teeth gently. DO NOT SMOKE. Smoking is very detrimental and can cause complications during your healing process.

### SWELLING

Often there is some swelling associated with oral surgery; it usually peaks on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> days after surgery. You can minimize this by using an ice pack (ice cubes secured in a zip lock bag will work) applied to your face or cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied, as needed, thirty minutes on, thirty minutes off, during the first 24 – 48 hours after surgery.

**If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits and check your blood glucose frequently after surgery.** It will be important to follow your physician's insulin schedule and dosing to properly maintain your glucose levels to help prevent infection, promote proper healing, and avoid diabetic related complications.

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## DIET MODIFICATION

### **1<sup>st</sup> day after surgery "The Mashed Potatoes Consistency Diet"**

This diet consists of any food that has the consistency of mashed potatoes. This should not limit your daily diet. You can prepare any food in a way that it is soft enough and has this type of consistency. As a general rule, if you can't mash it with the back of a fork, do not eat it.

#### **Suggestions for soft/mashed potato consistency diet:**

1. Soups
2. Scrambled or soft boiled eggs
3. Grits
4. Cream of Wheat
5. Oatmeal
6. Cottage cheese
7. Yogurt
8. Jell-O/Pudding
9. Fish
10. Ice Cream
11. Pancakes
12. Canned/Potted Meat
13. Mashed Potatoes
14. Pasta
15. Applesauce
16. Smoothies/Protein Drinks

## PAIN MEDICATION

Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. We recommend a combination of Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen for pain relief. The surgical team will discuss a specific pain management protocol with you based on your existing medical conditions and medications.

## ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics are prescribed for two reasons:

1. To treat active infection.
2. To prevent an infection.

Whatever the reason, it is EXTREMELY important to take antibiotics as directed and to finish taking all of the pills. Even if you start feeling better, it is still extremely important to finish medications completely. It is very ineffective, and in some cases dangerous, to take half the pills, and stop, and then start again.

**NOTE: If you develop a RASH, HIVES, ITCHING, DIAHREA or DIFFICULTY BREATHING when taking the Antibiotics or pain medication, STOP taking them and call the doctor immediately.**

## BLEEDING

Post-operative bleeding should be minimal; some oozing can be expected for 24 hours after the surgery. If you have post-operative bleeding, make sure to bite on the gauze **firmly**, and do not remove for 10 minutes. Alternatively, you can bite down on a wet tea bag. This has naturally occurring tannic acid, which can help stop bleeding.

## NAUSEA

Nausea is not an uncommon event after surgery with IV Sedation, and it is sometimes caused by stronger pain medicines. Nausea may be reduced by preceding each pill with a small amount of soft food. Call us if you do not feel better or if repeated vomiting is a problem.

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