

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR TOOTH EXTRACTIONS AND OTHER ORAL SURGERY PROCEDURES

A certain amount of bleeding, pain and swelling is normal. The day of surgery, reduce your activity as much as possible for several hours. Avoid eating, drinking through a straw, smoking, and unnecessary talking. Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth. These activities may hinder formation of a blood clot, which is needed for proper healing. Do not be alarmed if your vision is blurred for a time following anesthesia or if a "black and blue" bruise should appear at the site of injection or under your chin. The severity of postoperative pain will depend on the procedure and your physical condition. A certain amount of swelling can be expected; difficulty in opening the mouth widely and discomfort upon swallowing should be anticipated; numbness of lips and/or tongue on the side where the surgery was done may be experienced for a variable period of time. Follow instructions below to minimize complications and speed recovery.

**BLEEDING:** *Immediately following procedure*, keep steady and firm pressure on the bleeding area by biting on the sterile gauze given to you. Pressure helps reduce bleeding and permits formation of a blood clot. Gently remove gauze, and replace with a fresh gauze pad every 15 – 30 minutes, or as needed. *After 24 hours*, some oozing of blood may persist. If needed, resume use of sterile gauze. After bleeding has stopped, cautiously resume oral hygiene. For persistent bleeding, place a warm soaked tea bag over the area; cover with gauze; bite firmly for 20 minutes. Blood mixed with saliva can be misleading and can be confused with active bleeding. Call the office if you experience active bleeding from the wound site longer than 1 day.

**PAIN:** *Immediately following procedure*, begin taking medication as directed by your doctor to minimize discomfort when the anesthesia wears off. Ice bag applications can also relieve discomfort. *After 24 hours*, continue medication if pain persists. Over-the counter pain medicines like acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or both can be taken as directed on the label. Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking pain medication.

**SWELLING:** *Immediately following procedure*, apply an ice bag over the affected area. Use 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off to help prevent development of excessive swelling and discomfort. If an ice bag is unavailable, simply fill a heavy plastic bag with crushed ice, tie securely, and cover with a soft cloth to avoid skin irritation. *After 24 hours*, continued cold application will not reduce swelling any further and thus should not be necessary.

**ORAL HYGIENE:** *Beginning the day after surgery*, rinse mouth gently with a solution of ½ teaspoon of salt dissolved in a glass of lukewarm water. Repeat every 3-4 hours, especially after meals, for several days. Rinsing removes food particles and debris, and helps to prevent infection and promote healing. Resume your regular habits of oral hygiene, but avoid disturbing the surgical site so as not to loosen or remove the blood clot. Avoid using alcohol containing mouthwash or peroxide rinses.

**DIET:** Have meals at the usual time. Eat soft, nutritious food and drink up to 8 glasses of liquids daily. Chew on the opposite side from the surgical site. Being careful not to disturb the clot, add solid foods to your diet 2-3 days following surgery or when they are comfortable to chew. Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages as these may prolong bleeding.

**ANTIBIOTICS:** Antibiotics are not required for all surgical procedures. If you have been prescribed an antibiotic before your surgery, continue the antibiotic after the surgery until it is finished.

**FOLLOW-UP VISIT:** Return for a postoperative visit to make certain healing is progressing satisfactorily, to remove stitches, or have small spicules of bone removed that may loosen and work out through the gum.

**EMERGENCIES:** For fever, active bleeding, severe pain, or abnormal swelling, report to this office promptly or phone **304-723-7200**. If we cannot be reached, contact a hospital Emergency Room.