

Post-Operative Instructions

Prescriptions

After most periodontal procedures, an anti-inflammatory is prescribed (Ibuprofen, Advil or Motrin 800mg). Take 1 tab every 8 hours for at least 3 days. Do not exceed 3200 mg in 1 day. The doctor may have also prescribed a narcotic (Norco, Lortab, or Tylenol 3) or another pain medication to use as an additional pain reliever with Acetaminophen in it. Do not exceed 4000 mg of Acetaminophen in 1 day. These two medications can be taken together in an alternating manner while still following the directions on each label (i.e. 1 tab Ibuprofen 800mg, 4 hrs later Norco 5/325 mg, 4 hrs later 1 tab Ibuprofen etc. while still maintaining the 8 hr interval of Ibuprofen and 4-6 hr interval of Norco). Both medications work better together than either one alone. If you are allergic or cannot tolerate the anti-inflammatory or narcotic please notify our staff and we will prescribe other medications. Take over the counter Tylenol or Motrin if possible. If the doctor prescribed you an antibiotic, take the antibiotic as prescribed on the bottle until it is gone. Prematurely terminating the regimen can lead to bacterial resistance and infection of the surgical area. If you develop an upset stomach and/or diarrhea please contact our staff.

Bleeding

Be sure to discuss all medications you take including herbal and vitamin pills as they may be associated with prolonged bleeding. Blood values (PT, PTT, INR, bleeding time etc.) are evaluated with some medications to prevent profuse post-operative bleeding. After most surgical procedures, it is normal to notice blood in your saliva. To help aid in the coagulation process, bite with light to moderate pressure on gauze (damp tea bags work as well as they have tannic acid to aid in coagulation) for 15 minute intervals until the bleeding is controlled. If profuse or pooling bleeding is still occurring after 5-6 hours of gauze/tea bag pressure in 15 minute intervals, please contact the office immediately. Prior to the two week post op appointment, bleeding can start again and can be considered normal. If you have any questions or concerns please contact the office/doctor.

Brushing, Flossing, Proxybrush

It is critical to continue brushing and flossing all non-surgical areas. In the surgical area, lightly brush the teeth while refraining from brushing the gingiva (gums) starting the day of surgery. As an alternative, you can use a Q-tip saturated in mouth rinse to clean the white portion of the teeth, still avoiding the gingiva. Light flossing may start after the fourth day. If you use a water pick, do not use it again until instructed to do so by the doctor/staff as it can compromise the healing process. Teeth may be sensitive to hot/cold, however, maintain the brushing as much as possible. Sensitivity toothpaste can be used in these situations until the sensitivity improves. Topical treatments can be applied at your post-operative visit.

Mouth rinses and gel

If the doctor has prescribed you an antibacterial rinse (Stella Life) you may start using this rinse the evening after surgery, then twice a day (morning and night after brushing) for at least 4 days. Some prescription mouth rinses may cause reversible staining, burning, taste alteration. Notify our staff if you are experiencing this and stop the rinse. Over the counter mouth rinses or salt water may be used after 4 days. Gently dab with a Q-tip the gel you were given over the surgical area, morning and night for four days for healing.

Sutures and Periodontal Dressing

The doctor may have used sutures that fall out on their own or those requiring removal at your post op appointment. Unless causing severe irritation, do not remove sutures on your own. Depending on the procedure performed, this may inhibit proper healing and negatively affect the outcome. If you have a periodontal dressing (pink putty) over the surgical area brushing is still permitted. The dressing may fall out at anytime before the post operative appointment starting from the night of the procedure. Once the putty falls out, light flossing and proxybrush use are permitted and encouraged after day 2. Replacement is not required, however, try to retain the dressing as long as possible.

Swelling and Bruising

Localized oral swelling and bruising is considered normal after select periodontal procedures (i.e. soft tissue grafting, sinus augmentation, advanced bone grafting). This process usually will peak at 3-4 days after the procedure and will usually last about a week. Normal bruising may extend from the eye to below the jaw line. To minimize swelling, take the prescribed anti-inflammatory for at least 3 days and apply an ice pack to the area for 20 minutes on and 10 min off as soon as you leave our office. Repeat this for 2-3 hours. Cover the ice pack with a thin towel and never directly apply the ice pack to your face. If you develop a fever please notify our staff/doctor.

Diet

Directly following your procedure, eat a small soft food meal and take your medications. This is especially important after sedation procedures to help prevent post operative vomiting and nausea. Do not eat solid foods until the local anesthetic has worn off. Maintaining adequate fluid intake during the first 12-24 hours is important to avoid dehydration. Avoid using straws as the negative pressure can dislodge the blood clot. Avoid alcohol as there may be an interaction with the antibiotic prescribed leading to drug toxicity and other complications.

Activity

Rest! Plan to stay home the remainder of the day. After 24 hours you may return to your regular schedule. Avoid strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, jogging, exercise, etc. for at least 3 days following your surgery.

Smoking

Smoking interferes with the healing process. Not only is the topical exposure to the heat detrimental, but the systemic effects are significantly worse. Do not smoke for at least 72 hours following surgery as it compromises your ability to heal properly. If you cannot completely quit smoking, it is recommended to stop smoking 3 weeks following surgery for better long-term prognosis.

Sedation

If you were sedated (oral or IV), you may not remember part of or anything from your surgical appointment. Please go home and rest. Do not drive, operate machinery, or watch young children under the influence of sedatives for the rest of the day. The day after your procedure, you may resume normal activities.

Emergency

Please call the office during business hours or if after call the emergency line at (248) 480-4910.