



## Dental Implants & Bone Grafts Post-Operative Instructions

### **ICE**

You will be given an ice pack at the end of the surgery to take home with you. Apply ice for 30 minutes on, then 30 minutes off until bedtime. Only continue the ice the next day if swelling continues to increase. Typically, the swelling will peak the first morning after surgery and ice will not be needed after the day of surgery.

Some patients use a large bag of frozen peas, or their own form of ice pack. Whatever works best for you is fine, just try to keep the ice conformed to your jaw during the 30-minute intervals the day of surgery.

### **REST**

This is probably the single most important thing that you can do to control post-operative pain and complications.

Keeping your head in a slightly elevated position will help. A recliner during the day and extra pillows at night will help control swelling and discomfort.

Rest for the first 3 days, and then listen to your body as to how and when to increase normal activities.

Remember: Through our techniques and medications we do a lot to avoid excessive swelling and bruising. What you do at home, by following all of these instructions is just as important in limiting post-operative swelling, pain and bruising. That said, it is not uncommon to experience some degree of swelling and bruising after this type of surgery. Bruising may even rarely include under the eyes and along the jaw line for some patients.

**NO DRIVING, or other potentially hazardous or risky activities for 24 hours after sedation.**

## **RINSING AND BRUSHING**

Avoid rinsing on the day of surgery. Then, begin using warm salt water rinses one day after surgery. Using 1 teaspoon of salt in an 8-ounce glass of warm water, GENTLY, swish around your whole mouth for several minutes. Ideally, do this at least 4 times a day, preferably after breakfast, lunch and dinner and before bed for the first week after surgery. This helps to soothe the tissue and control bacteria and debris around the surgical area.

Continue to brush and floss all areas of your mouth, avoiding the surgical area (s) for the first week or two. Because the pumice found in most tooth paste can interfere with healing, we recommend Biotene or Peridex (Chlorhexidine) on your brush for the first 2 weeks (we can provide this for you).

## **DIET**

Smoothies and shakes with a balanced nutrition are a great way to eat during your initial healing. Soups, yogurt, eggs, and other foods that can be easily eaten during the first week of healing. Fish, chicken or other soft meats can be introduced after initial healing. Avoid popcorn or foods with small seeds for 3 weeks as these can interfere with healing.

## **SMOKING, ALCOHOL & TOBACCO**

Alcohol is strictly prohibited for the first few days and best if taken only sparingly for the next 3 weeks. Alcohol inhibits healing which is most critical for 3 weeks post op. If you can abstain for the first 3 or 4 weeks, do.

Please do not smoke or use tobacco, ideally for the week leading up to surgery and the week after. We realize this may not be practical for some people, but expect possible compromise to healing if you smoke.

## **HOW TO TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS & STAY AHEAD OF THE PAIN**

If you have IV sedation you will be given antibiotics and steroids to control inflammation, pain, and swelling in your IV during surgery and an IM (in the muscle) injection (in the deltoid muscle located in your upper arm) at the end of the surgery. These are a great aid in controlling post-operative pain and complications.

Once you get home, starting about 4 hours after your surgery (or as soon as you feel ANY discomfort) begin taking Advil (ibuprofen) 3 tablets at a time (600 mg), four times a day, for the next 5 days.

A good rhythm to get into is to take them at breakfast, lunch and dinner time, and then just before bed.

If while on this base of Ibuprofen you experience discomfort, then take one Extra Strength Tylenol immediately. This can be repeated 4 times a day.

This stepwise method of taking over the counter pain meds, takes advantage of their synergistic combination and will control MOST post op pain.

If you drink alcohol every day, have any form of liver compromise, or are over the age of 65 years old, or have any other problems taking Tylenol we may decrease the Tylenol dose, ask us if this pertains to you!

Drink plenty of fluids with your medications.

Finally, if there is breakthrough pain during this regimen, add one Percocet. If you have no contraindications to taking these medications, these are considered safe doses and can be combined in this manner.

AVOID GOING TO THE PERCOCET BEFORE TAKING IBUPROFEN AND TYLENOL TO SEE IF YOU NEED IT. PERCOCET IS A GREAT DRUG WHEN IT'S NEEDED, BUT CAN HAVE SIDE EFFECTS SUCH AS NAUSEA, CONSTIPATION, AND A POTENTIAL FOR ADDICTION ISSUES IF OVERUSED. Many of our patients find that they need little or none of this narcotic by taking the Advil and Tylenol correctly.

IF YOU HAVE UNCONTROLLED SEVERE PAIN CALL US FOR HELP. THIS IS NOT CONSIDERED NORMAL AFTER OUR SURGERIES.

## **ANTIBIOTICS**

If you need antibiotics, and you had IV sedation, your first dose of antibiotics is usually given through the IV. We will prescribe an oral antibiotic to be taken starting 6 hours after surgery and continued until gone.

Whenever we give antibiotics, we recommend that you also take a PROBIOTIC. Because antibiotics kill not only "bad" bacteria we are defending against, but also "good" bacteria found in your gut.

The probiotic helps maintain the good bacteria. This can be taken in the form of yogurt, taking a few spoonfuls 1/2 hour before your antibiotic and 1/2 hour after (plain Activia yogurt is very good for this). Another probiotic option is to ask your pharmacist to recommend an over the counter probiotic in pill form. Continue to take probiotics for 2 weeks after the antibiotic is finished to minimize your risk of complications.

## **SUTURES AND PROTECTIVE COVERINGS**

Usually we use NON resorbable sutures, in which case you will be given a follow up appointment to have them removed and evaluate healing, which is usually within 2 to 3 weeks.

Sometimes your sutures are resorbable and will probably dissolve within a couple of weeks. If after a week they are irritating we can take them out earlier, just call for an appointment.

If we have placed a protective covering over the site, try not to chew on it or move it if possible. Many times, these are in place for up to 3 weeks and will be removed with your sutures. If lost early, no worries. Just call and we will decide whether to replace it or leave as is.

Finally, if you have any problems or questions please call the office. We are happy to help. If AFTER HOURS text the cell phone number of the doctor given to you at your appointment. We give all of our surgical patients this number so we can help you through your healing.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TRUST IN PARTNERING WITH US FOR YOUR DENTAL HEALTH.**