

Post Op Instructions Following Periodontal Surgeries

Please read and follow these instructions. Wound healing may be less predictable in the mouth because the muscles are constantly in motion with speaking, eating, swallowing and brushing. You can improve your healing, have less swelling and fewer complications if you follow these instructions carefully.

MEDICATIONS: Continue taking any medications that you started before your surgery such as antibiotics or systemic steroids, as instructed. If you did not receive your prescriptions before the surgery, fill your prescriptions and take your medications as directed. Some studies have shown that yogurt with lactobacillus and acidophilus milk may reduce antibiotic-related diarrhea. Please call Dr. Gil to report an allergic reaction to any prescribed drug. If you develop a rash in response to a prescribed drug, you should stop the medication immediately and take Benedryl or an antihistamine.

DISCOMFORT: Mild discomfort is a normal part of the healing process and should be anticipated. Take the prescribed pain medication as soon as the anesthetic begins wearing off, not when the pain peaks. Follow label directions for dosage and frequency information. If you are taking a narcotic medication, do not drive. Usually patients will take the pain medication the day of the surgery and that night to help you sleep. The next day, you may take the prescription medication if you feel it is necessary or you may take Advil, Aleve or Tylenol Extra Strength. Do not take a dose of aspirin that is more than 81 mg for 5 days after surgery as this may cause bleeding in the surgical site.

SWELLING: Swelling is a normal part of the healing process and can be minimized with ice packs applied gently to the outside of your face and jaw for the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Repeat the pattern of holding the ice pack on the face in the area of surgery off and on for 10 minutes at a time. Do not press hard or rub the area or you risk disturbing the surgical site. **The swelling usually peaks in 48 hours and tapers off after that. Ice packs will minimize the amount of swelling you experience.** If you do not ice the area, you will have swelling that will taper off after about 3-7 days. This swelling may put pressure on the sutures and the surgical site. You will improve your chances of healing with a better result if you minimize swelling by icing the area for the first two days.

BLEEDING: A small amount of bleeding or oozing is normal and usually occurs on the day of surgery and sometimes, the following day. If the surgical site is bleeding, you may place a cold, wet teabag in the area and apply continuous pressure by either biting down or applying even finger pressure for 20-60 minutes as needed. If the dressing is in place, use two fingers to apply even pressure on both sides of the dressing. Keep your head elevated. When you lie down, use two pillows to keep your head slightly raised. Do not spit, do not swish vigorously and do not drink through a straw because this may initiate bleeding. Do not exercise or do anything that increases your heart rate

such as strenuous physical activity because this may raise blood pressure and initiate bleeding in your mouth.

CLEANLINESS: Do not use an electric toothbrush anywhere in your mouth until your follow-up visit. A manual toothbrush with a small amount of toothpaste may be used for the rest of your mouth as well as floss. Take care not to stretch your cheeks near the surgical site as this might pull on the sutures. Do not brush anywhere in or near the surgical site(s) until you see your Dr. Gil for your follow-up visit. Do not rinse for 3 hours after the procedure. After the initial 3 hour period, you may rinse gently with lukewarm salt water but do not spit forcefully. If you have been given a prescription for antiseptic mouthwash, start using it the morning after the surgery and use it twice a day. You may either hold the mouthwash in your mouth for one minute or saturate a cotton ball and GENTLY dab the area with it for one minute. Do not use peroxide, Scope or Listerine.

FOOD: For the first 24 hours, do not eat hot foods or liquids. Heat may cause an increase in bleeding from the surgical site. Eat a soft diet such as pasta, meatloaf, fish, chicken, cooked vegetables, smoothies or yogurt. Avoid crunchy foods such as hard breakfast cereal, hard crusted bread, raw vegetables, chips, popcorn or nuts. Chew on the opposite side and cut your food up into small pieces. Eat a balanced diet and maintain adequate fluid intake. Usually you will need to stay on a soft diet for 2-3 weeks but follow your doctor's instructions.

SUTURES: Do not tug or remove your sutures. Follow your doctor's orders for your post-operative visits. We use both resorbable and non-resorbable sutures. Your doctor needs to see you for your follow-up to evaluate your healing progress and remove sutures if needed.

DRESSING: If a periodontal dressing has been placed, do not disturb it. It may come off before your next appointment. This is not an emergency and you will not need to have it replaced. Do not pull on the sutures if the dressing is lost. If the dressing is still in place at your follow-up visit, we usually remove it at that time.

REST: Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours and get adequate rest. Absolutely no smoking for at least 48 hours.

AN EMERGENCY IS:

A) Excessive bleeding occurs, is prolonged and is not controlled with a teabag

B) Severe pain occurs, is prolonged and is not controlled with the medication

C) Marked swelling that is accompanied by fever

You will be limited to soft foods for a few days after your surgery. Some recommended foods are:

- Gelatin
- Pudding
- Yogurt

- Mashed Potatoes
- Ice Cream
- Thin Soups
- ...and other food you can eat without chewing