

Post-Operative Instructions After Periodontal Surgery

Medications:

- Take all medications that are prescribed or recommended to you and remember to **finish your antibiotics**.
- Discontinue antibiotics in case of rash, itching or upset stomach and advise the office.
- After finishing the antibiotics, drink buttermilk or eat yogurt for 3-4 days to restore good intestinal bacteria.
- All medications should be taken after eating to prevent nausea.
- **If a mouth rinse was prescribed, do not use until 24 hours after your surgery.**

Bleeding: A moderate amount of bleeding or oozing can be expected during the first two days after surgery.

To control bleeding:

- Place gauze on the area and apply **gentle pressure**. Change the gauze every 30-45 minutes until the bleeding has stopped. **Always remove gauze** before sleeping, drinking or eating.
- Apply ice packs on the outside of the jaw or cheek.
- If heavy, uncontrolled bleeding or clot formation occur, call the office immediately.

Swelling: Swelling is common and may peak 3 days after the surgery. Bruising may also be associated with the swelling and should reduce as the swelling dissipates. It is recommended to sleep with your head elevated at about 45 degrees for the first 2-3 days after the surgery to reduce swelling. If swelling does not reduce or it increases 5 days after your surgery, or you are in pain, call the office. Ice packs can be used to reduce swelling and should be applied during the first 12 hours following the surgery and may be used up to 2 days after the surgery. Apply ice packs 20 minutes 'on' and 20 minutes 'off'. Ice packs must be wrapped in a thin cloth and applied on the outside of the jaw or cheeks over the surgical site.

Rinsing & Brushing:

- Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth until **24 hours after** your surgery as it will delay the healing process.
- Brush your teeth using a soft tooth brush and avoid brushing the gum line of the surgical site
- If you have had a gingival graft, then do not brush or floss the area until your post-operative visit. You may rinse your mouth after eating by using a 1/2 tsp. of salt dissolved in a glass of warm water.
- **Do not swish** when rinsing your mouth; instead slightly lower and gently move your head left and right. **Do not spit out the water**, but let it drip out in the sink. Use the brushing and rinsing method until your first post-operative visit.

Stitches: Stitches (if present) will dissolve in approximately 7-10 days. They may come loose or fall out before your first post-operative visit. As long as there is no continuous bleeding, discomfort or pain, this is not a cause for concern. In some cases, non-dissolvable stitches might be placed. If this is the case, **do not remove stitches** and wait until your first postoperative appointment. Whether dissolvable or non-dissolvable **never attempt to remove a stitch on your own**.

Nutrition: During the first 24 hours following the surgery, **avoid hot fluids** (tea, coffee, hot soup) and also **avoid using your implant to chew food for 8 weeks**. Limit yourself to a soft diet such as pudding, Jell-O, yogurt, apple sauce, scrambled eggs, mashed bananas, overcooked pasta. Liquid supplements such as Ensure, Boost, Carnation Instant Breakfast are also excellent. Increase your nutrition gradually but avoid hard to chew foods until your first post-operative visit. Drink plenty of fluids, but **do not use straws**.

Activities: It is **not advisable** to go to the gym, participate in sporting activities, swim, lift/or push heavy objects, due to the high risk of bleeding until 5 days after your surgery.

Smoking: Smoking seriously **slows the healing process** and **increases the risk of infection** in your mouth. Avoid smoking during the first 48 hours following the surgery. Reduce smoking as much as possible for proper healing.

Dentures/Palatal Protector: If you currently have a denture or palatal protector, **they should remain in place for the first 24 hours**. After 24 hours you may remove them to rinse and replace them **immediately**. You may remove your dentures to soak overnight on your second postoperative night. Also make an appointment with your dentist for any adjustments if needed.

On Your First Post-operative Visit: Remember to bring any dentures, night guard or other oral prosthesis so that your periodontist or hygienist can evaluate proper fit.





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Immediately following surgery, return home and relax. You may return to work or regular activities tomorrow, but it is **not advisable** to perform any strenuous activities within one week of a post-operative.

If you have had **intravenous sedation**, you will feel groggy for up to 24 hours. It is critical that you do not drive, operate heavy machinery, make critical decisions or consume alcohol during this period.

While lips and/or tongue are numb, **do not** bite them or push any protective dressing that may be present. **Do not** pull back the lips to observe the surgical site as it puts undue pressure on the gums, which are trying to heal.

Generally, the most uncomfortable time is when the freezing starts to dissipate. It is recommended that you take the prescribed and/or recommended pain medication as soon as possible, preferably before the freezing wears off.

Protective dressing, if applied, is usually a thick pink colour paste or whitish thin plastic-like dressing. They are used mostly to protect a surgical site during the healing period. **Do not** remove or pick at the area; allow it to come off on its own. If they come off before the first post-operative appointment, there is no problem unless you are experiencing pain or discomfort. **Do not** try to replace the dressing; simply throw it away. In addition, there is no harm to you if it is swallowed accidentally.

If You Had Graft Surgery:

There might be histacryl (dental glue) where the new tissue was placed. It is normal for this glue to be white or grey in appearance. After several days, this glue, along with the superficial layer of skin cells may slough off. This is normal; however, **do not** pick at the area to help the glue come off. Allow the glue to come off on its own time. There is no harm to you if it is swallowed accidentally. If a palatal stent has been given, it can be worn at your discretion.

See Back of Page for Detailed Instructions

