

Post-Operative Surgery Care

Care of the mouth after implant surgery has an important effect upon healing. Swelling, discomfort, restricted jaw function, and cheek discoloration is expected, and need not cause alarm. These may be minimized by the following instructions. Please read them carefully. It is strongly urged that they be followed.

Hemorrhage Control

Expect some bleeding or oozing. Slight bleeding is expected and desirable for up to one week. Remove the gauze pack upon arriving home. If the bleeding continues after the first hour, remove the old gauze and place a new piece over the wound. Apply firm pressure for an additional 30-60 minutes. For excessive bleeding, you may place a warm tea bag (Lipton Black Tea) over the area for 45 minutes. Squeeze out the excess water from the tea bag, wrap it in a piece of gauze, and place over wound. Tea contains an ingredient that helps promote blood clotting. Assume a semi-upright bed position, using 2 pillows. Spitting and rinsing causes bleeding. Avoid this if at all possible.

Pain Control

You should expect some level of discomfort and pain as the numbness from the anesthesia subsides. Prior to the local anesthesia wearing off take the following medications every **six hours** as needed for comfort:

600mg-800mg Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin)

If additional pain control is desired between the 6 hour windows the following can be added

325mg or 500mg Tylenol (Acetaminophen) every 4 hours as needed for pain. If discomfort is not managed with the above medication schedule, continue taking the Ibuprofen but stop taking the acetaminophen (Tylenol) and substitute the following:

Vicodin (Hydrocodone) or any other narcotic which your doctor may have prescribed. Take 1 tablet by mouth every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.

Do not sign any important papers while on prescription pain medication. Do not drive or operate machinery while taking narcotic pain medication.

Swelling Control

Expect some swelling. During the first 12-48 hours after surgery, swelling may develop and continue to increase into the second and third day. Apply a bag of ice covered with a towel to the outside of the surgical site in 20 minute intervals. Do this as much as possible in the initial 24 hours. This will minimize your swelling. Some patients find that icing helps control pain. Therefore wearing ice for several days may be beneficial to reduce pain. Do not use ice after the first day.

Diet

To skip meals will add to your discomfort. A liquid diet is wise the day of surgery, and then very soft food high in protein and vitamins, is recommended for another few days. Eat soft foods for the first 48 hours. These foods should require little or no chewing and are easily tolerated by the stomach. A nutritious diet throughout your healing process is most important to your comfort and temperament. Soft foods may be chewed on the side opposite your implant surgery after the first day. No straws, as these will disrupt healing. **Try not to disturb the implant site with anything that may cause movement of the implant or the surgical site. Any micro movement either by chewing in the area or manipulation with your tongue can cause non-integration and failure of the implant.**

Nausea

Expect a slightly upset stomach. There are several sources of nausea. Medications, if used at all, to sedate our patients will have a slight ability to create nausea. The second source of nausea can be from swallowing blood from your surgical site. Blood is very irritating to the stomach. If experiencing nausea the patient should refrain from eating as this may induce vomiting. One ounce of clear carbonated beverage (7up or ginger ale) every 5-6 hours will usually terminate nausea. Follow this with mild tea or clear broth and soda crackers. The third source of nausea can be from narcotic pain medication (Vicodin or Tylenol with Codeine). Coating the stomach with a little food prior to taking these medications can minimize nausea associated with taking pain medication. If the patient develops persistent vomiting please contact our office.

Oral Hygiene (DO NOT SWISH UNTIL ADVISED TO)

Healing takes place best in a clean mouth. Meticulous oral hygiene should be continued in all other areas of the mouth, but avoid brushing and flossing in the area of surgery during the first week. You can begin soak with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in 8oz glass of warm water) after the initial 24 hours to help remove debris, prevent a sour taste and make your mouth feel more comfortable. A medicated soak may have been prescribed in addition to salt water use. This medication is referred to as Peridex (Chlorohexidine); you can begin soaking with Peridex after the surgery to help remove debris and aid in healing. The instructions are to soak for 30 seconds and then expectorate gently (spit). **Do not swallow.** This is done 2 times daily, after breakfast & before bedtime. Avoid drinking or rinsing for 30 minutes after using Peridex. Continue this care until prescription is gone or until your surgeon recommends.

Smokers

Smokers are advised **not to smoke**. Smoking after implant placement increases incidence of implant failure by 15%.

Antibiotic Medication

Antibiotics are taken before the surgery period to minimize the risk of wound infection. Please take antibiotics as prescribed until the entire dose is gone. There may be a slight elevation of temperature for 48 hours after surgery. If you develop symptoms of diarrhea stop taking the antibiotic and contact our office. Tip: eat yogurt with active cultures or acidophilus to help prevent diarrhea and secondary yeast infections while taking antibiotics. In addition if you develop hives, rash or swelling discontinue the medication and please contact our office immediately.

Activity Level

Limit physical activity during the first 48 hours after surgery. Over-exertion often leads to postoperative bleeding and discomfort. Avoid over fatigue. Go to bed early at night and allow for rest during the day. Do not drive any vehicle or operate any machinery while taking narcotic pain medication.

Sutures

You may have sutures (stitches) around your implant. These are used to close the surgical wound. Most sutures are self-dissolving. Others may need to be removed. Do not tamper with or remove these, your surgeon will remove them when he finds appropriate.

Additional Notes:
