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IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CARE
FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

You have had a surgical procedure in your mouth which must be cared for as carefully as an operation on any other part of the body. By following these instructions, infections, swelling, and pain can be held to a minimum.

BLEEDING

1. Leave folded 2x2 gauze pads over the area operated until bleeding subsides, holding them in place with moderate biting pressure for 30-60 minutes. Once the bleeding subsides, they should be gently removed.
2. Slight bleeding is beneficial. If bleeding seems excessive and should persist:
 - A. Wipe out excessive blood
 - B. Place a folded piece of clean gauze over the bleeding area and bite down on it until bleeding subsides or gauze becomes saturated. Repeat until bleeding is controlled. The application of ice will help slow the bleeding. Gauze should be thick enough to prevent teeth from coming together.
ALL PRESSURE SHOULD BE UPON THE BLEEDING AREA.
 - C. Sit up or semi-recline and rest for several hours following oral surgery.
 - D. If bleeding is still excessive 6 to 8 hours after surgery, a moistened tea bag can be used over the wound to slow the bleeding.
3. **DO NOT SMOKE** for a period of five days. Puffing on cigarettes tends to dislodge the blood clot and prolong bleeding. Nicotine also delays healing.
4. **NO SPITTING, RINSING, OR SUCKING** on a straw for 24 hours after surgery. This tends to dislodge the blood clot and prolong bleeding.

DIET

An adequate, highly nutritious diet MUST be followed to insure a speedy recovery. Immediately following surgery, a COOL liquid diet should be maintained for 24 hours. After 24 hours, soft foods are recommended and should be continued for several days. We realize that the consumption of foods will be difficult, but an adequate diet is essential for proper healing.

Suggestions: Eggs, Jell-O, mashed potatoes, custard, milkshakes, cottage cheese, etc. We also recommend daily use of a good multi-vitamin and vitamin C. Carnation Instant Breakfast, Slim Fast, Ensure, Boost, etc. are all good supplements until a normal diet can be resumed.

SWELLING

When extensive surgery has been done about the face, swelling is not unusual. Your swelling will not peak for **2 to 3 days**. To help minimize this, place an ice bag or ice cubes wrapped in a damp towel on the side of the face over the area where surgery was performed. Leave in place for 20 minutes, remove for 10 minutes and then repeat this series for a period of 48 hours. Ice is of little benefit after this time. Begin ice treatment as soon after surgery as possible. Keeping your head elevated for 40 hours will help minimize swelling.

MOUTH RINSES

The day following the surgery use warm salt water (1/2 teaspoonful of table salt to a glass of warm water) as a GENTLE mouth rinse between and after every meal. These rinses should be continued for several weeks following surgery. The surgical area should always be kept CLEAN.

SUTURES

If sutures (stitches) have been used in your surgical procedure, they may absorb (dissolve) on their own following surgery. If your sutures require removal, we will schedule an appointment to monitor your healing and remove sutures. Do not be alarmed if they become loose and bothersome. Any foreign body in your mouth tends to magnify itself out of proportion. **DO NOT** play with the sutures with your tongue.

NUMBNESS

Following the removal of teeth of the lower jaw, some patients will experience numbness of the lower lip and tongue. The nerve involved provides feeling only and has no effect on eating, talking or your appearance. If numbness does occur, it is more often felt as a minor annoyance and usually disappears with normal healing.

MEDICATIONS

You may be given prescriptions for pain control and swelling. Unless necessary, antibiotics will not be given after surgery. Take all medications as directed.

Your care is individual. No two patients are alike. Although well-intended, please DO NOT take too seriously advice from friends, no matter how much experience they have had. Any problems should be discussed with the person best able to effectively help you - your dentist. Some bleeding, swelling, and pain are expected. However, if for any reason you are alarmed or excessively concerned about the condition of your mouth, please call our office. (405) 751-4556