Periodontal Specialists, PLLC

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Post-Operative Instructions

These instructions apply to the surgical procedure just completed. They are designed to help you minimize post-surgical discomfort and inform you of any situation that may require special attention.

Pain Medications

It is not unusual to have discomfort for at least the first week following your surgical procedure. You will be given a prescription for medication to help you tolerate the post-surgical recovery period. Please take your medications as directed. If necessary, you may take your pain medication more frequently than every 4-6 hours to stay ahead of the soreness. It is advisable to not take pain medication on an empty stomach, as nausea may result.

As an alternative to prescription medications, some patients have found taking a combination of over-the-counter Ibuprofen and Tylenol to be effective. You may take the combination in either of the following dosages: 3 Advil Liqui-Gels and 2 Regular Strength Tylenol or 3 Advil Liqui-Gels and 1 Extra Strength Tylenol, every 4-6 hours as needed.

Note: When taking any prescribed medication containing Acetaminophen (Tylenol), i.e.: Percocet, Hydrocodone, Vicodin, or Tylenol with Codeine, you should not take additional Tylenol so as not to exceed the safety level of Acetaminophen.

Antibiotics

Please alert the office to any allergies or sensitivities that you might have to antibiotics. An antibiotic may be prescribed following your surgical procedure. Take as directed until gone. It is advisable not to take these medications on an empty stomach, as nausea may result.

For women taking birth control pills, be advised that antibiotics may interfere with their effectiveness.

Swelling

Swelling following your surgical procedure is a normal part of the healing process and will typically increase 2-3 days after the procedure. Sometimes bruising can occur especially if you are fair skinned.

To minimize the swelling, place an ice pack over the outside cheek area for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. Continue using ice for 2-3 days following the procedure as often as possible.

Bleeding

A small amount of bleeding is normal for the first week following your periodontal surgery. If excessive or continuous bleeding occurs:

- Immediately apply moistened gauze (DO NOT use paper towels or dish towels) to the area where bleeding is coming from and use moderate pressure with your thumb for 20 minutes; The pressure should be constant, and you should not replace the gauze rapidly. Repeat if necessary.
- Enclose a moistened tea bag in a gauze square and apply pressure for 20 minutes.
- Do not rinse your mouth.
- Elevate your head when lying down.
- Call the office if bleeding is uncontrollable after following the above mentioned instructions.

Dressing

The dressing (which acts as a bandage) is used to protect the surgical site and help reduce discomfort. It is common for the dressing to fall off on its own over the next few days following your procedure. If the dressing becomes uncomfortable, please call the office for direction.

Eating

A soft diet is recommended for a full 1-2 weeks following your dental surgery. Avoid chewing on the side where surgery was completed. Avoid hot foods or liquids for approximately 1 hour following the surgery so as not to soften the dressing.

Foods such as cottage cheese, oatmeal, soup, eggs, yogurt, pasta, mashed potatoes, casseroles, and fruits are more easily eaten. Remember, adequate nutrition is essential for feeling better as well as for healing.

Exercise

Please refrain from strenuous physical activities for 24-48 hours following your dental surgery. Exercising can cause an increase in blood pressure and can cause bleeding to occur. Activities to be avoided include:

- Running
- Swimming
- Heavy Weight Training

Smoking

Do not smoke for at least 2 weeks following your surgical procedure. It will significantly slow healing and can compromise results.

Alcohol

Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications.

Rinsing

Do not rinse for the first 24 hours. After that, you may use the prescription mouthwash or warm salt water rinses. Do not vigorously swish. Instead be gentle when rinsing and spitting.

Brushing

Do not brush the surgical site. You may resume brushing/flossing when your doctor advises you to do so.

Suture Removal

Some of the sutures may require removal at your post operative visit. Other sutures are dissolvable, and do not need removal. Your doctor will inform you of which ones you have had placed.

You may notice increased discomfort 3-4 days after the surgical procedure. As the tissues begin to heal, they may pull against the sutures and dressing. Use pain medication as needed to address discomfort.

Contact Us

Please contact us immediately if any of the following symptoms occur:

1. Excessive bleeding that cannot be stopped following the outlined instructions
2. Severe pain that cannot be controlled with the medication prescribed
3. Marked swelling and fever
4. Any rash/allergy symptoms develop