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POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Good care of the mouth after surgery has an important positive effect on healing. Some swelling, discomfort, and restricted jaw function are expected and need not cause alarm. These may be minimized by reading the following instructions and following them as carefully as possible.

BLEEDING CONTROL

Gauze sponges have been placed over the surgery site. These should be held in place by firm, constant biting pressure for a full hour, place another folded gauze sponge over the surgery site and bite firmly for another 60 minutes. Try to avoid spitting, sucking, or other disruptive activity until bleeding has stopped. If after two hours there is still active bleeding, moisten a tea bag, wrap it in a gauze sponge, place it over the extraction site, and bite firmly for 30 minutes. Repeat this procedure until bleeding has subsided. It is normal to have some oozing of blood and blood-tinged saliva for 2 to 3 days following surgery. Bed linens should be adequately protected to avoid staining. If careful following of the above steps does not stop heavy bleeding, call this office immediately or go to the nearest hospital emergency room for treatment.

PAIN CONTROL

Ordinarily the use of a non-prescription medication like Ibuprofen (Advil or Nuprin) will adequately relieve pain when taken in doses of 2 or 3 tablets (200mg each) every 4 to 6 hours. Children should receive proportionally smaller doses based on their weight, according to directions. If you need something stronger, the prescription medication should be taken as directed. Aspirin or anything containing aspirin following dental extractions may prolong the post-operative bleeding. **DO NOT SMOKE. SMOKING WITHIN 48 HOURS AFTER EXTRACTIONS MAY INCREASE CHANCES OF INFECTION AND PAIN.**

SWELLING CONTROL

The amount of post-operative swelling usually depends on the difficulty of the surgery and the time involved. If the surgery was difficult, you may benefit by the application of ICE PACKS to the cheeks and jaw on the side of the surgery for the first 24 hours. Ice application should be in 15 minutes intervals, with rest periods of 10 to 15 minutes in between. After 24 hours, application of moist heat and hot rinses will decrease the swelling present and speed healing.

DIET

To skip meals will add to your discomfort and may cause dizziness, nausea, and weakness. Eat whatever feels comfortable. Soups and soft foods will be more comfortable for a few days. There are several commercial dietary supplements available that are high in protein and calories and are easy to make (Metrecal, Sego, Ensure, Instant Breakfast, etc...). **Do not drink carbonated drinks. Do not drink from a straw. Drink plenty of fluids for the next few days.**

HYGIENE

Try not to disturb the clotting process the day of surgery. The next day, warm mild salt-water rinses (1/4 teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water) may be gently started in the morning, after each meal, and before bed. Continue rinsing with the salt-water solution until the surgical site has healed. You should resume brushing your teeth at this time, but obviously be careful not to brush the surgical site itself. A clean mouth feels better and will heal faster. **Do Not Rinse with Mouthwash (Scope or Listerine)**

IF THERE ARE ANY PROBLEMS THAT PERSIST OR QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING YOUR TREATMENT PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE AT ANY TIME. WE WANT TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO MINIMIZE YOUR DISCOMFORT AND PREVENT COMPLICATIONS SO PLEASE FEEL FREE TO RETURN FOR POSTOPERATIVE FOLLOW UP.