

## Post-Operative Instructions

If you are experiencing a medical emergency please call **911 immediately**.

Please review and follow these instructions for better and faster healing and recovery. Feel free to ask us any questions if anything is not clear to you.

**Healing:** It is normal to feel soreness for 1-2 weeks following an oral surgical procedure. Typically, discomfort increases for 3-4 days following the surgery and then begins to subside after the 4<sup>th</sup> day. Additionally, while it may be tempting to pull back your lip to check how the surgery is healing, it is very important that you do not do this. Pulling on your lip may put extra tension on the sutures, causing them to come loose early and may interfere with surgical healing. In general, following these instructions will help you to remain comfortable, minimize any swelling, and help the surgical area to heal without any complications.

**Discomfort:** Post-operative discomfort is to be expected. Take the pain medication as prescribed for the first 3 days, then as needed for discomfort following that. It is recommended you alternate between over the counter Acetaminophen or prescribed Lodine every 6-8 hours to help with discomfort. If your discomfort is not managed with Acetaminophen or Lodine alone, you may take the prescribed narcotic (Tylenol #3) but be sure to then only alternate every 3-4 hours with Lodine since most narcotics contain acetaminophen.

**Do not drink alcohol or operate heavy machinery while on pain medication.** Minor discomfort may persist for 1-2 weeks, it should be continuously feeling better every day.

**Any discomfort or swelling that is worsening after the 4<sup>th</sup> day may indicate an infection/dry socket/poor healing.** Please contact us right away if this is the case so that we may further assess.

**Swelling and Bruising:** Minor swelling on the inside or outside of your mouth is normal and will usually begin to subside after the 4<sup>th</sup> day of healing. In addition to taking pain medications as directed, using an ice pack up to 24 hours after the surgery can help to minimize any potential swelling. When you get home from your surgery, hold on an ice pack wrapped in paper towels or a hand towel against your cheek for 20 minutes, then rest for 20 minutes. Repeat this several times for up to 24 hours. After the first day you can apply warm compresses in the same usage throughout the day.

**Bleeding: Do not smoke, spit, or drink through a straw for two weeks following the surgery.**

Light bleeding for the first 24 hours after a surgical appointment is normal. It may mix with your saliva, causing it to look red or pink when you rinse, and this is no cause for concern. Avoid vigorous rinsing or brushing close to the surgical site.

**However, if you notice that bleeding starts to increase, do not rinse your mouth vigorously but wipe the blood with a clean cloth, try to visualize the bleeding spot, and apply firm pressure on it with a clean piece of cloth or soaked black tea bag to the bleeding spot. If you are unable to get the bleeding to stop, call your doctor.**

**Sutures:** Most sutures will dissolve after 7-14 days following surgery. Occasionally, sutures that last longer may be used by your doctor if he/she feels that it will help your surgical success. In these cases, sutures will be removed approximately 2 weeks after surgery, or as determined appropriate by your doctor.

**Oral Hygiene:** Rinse your mouth with the prescribed mouth rinse or 50:50 hydrogen peroxide with water twice per day beginning the morning **after** the surgery. You may also do a salt water rinse (1 tsp of salt in one cup of warm water) after every meal or more often. Brushing and flossing is normal everywhere **except** the area of the surgery for one week. After one week, you may gently begin to brush just the biting surfaces of the teeth in the area of the surgery. Do not brush close to the gum line until your doctor gives you clearance.

**Diet:** Eat **soft foods only** for 2 weeks following the surgical procedure. Anything spicy, hard, fibrous, crunchy, chewy, excessively hot and cold, should be avoided until after your post-operative visit. As a general simple rule to follow if you can cut the food you are attempting to eat with a fork without effort "it's a go."

**Activity:** It is important to refrain from strenuous activity, cardio, steam room, sauna, and heavy lifting for the first 48 hours after surgery.

**Smoking:** Do not smoke for at least 14 days post-operatively. It will delay healing and could lead to a "dry socket" which can be very uncomfortable and will require immediate attention.

**Antibiotics:** If you were prescribed antibiotics, **be sure to take them as directed until they are finished**, even if the surgical area is already feeling better. For female patients, antibiotics will make oral contraceptives less effective thus it is recommended you find another form of birth control during this time. If you believe you may be having an allergic reaction or adverse side effects, please call our office.

**Appliances:** If you were provided a removable appliance to wear and experience swelling and/or discomfort, please avoid wearing it for a few days until your swelling goes down. If you must wear your appliance for esthetic reasons, please call our office.

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### **POST OPERATIVE FAQ'S**

**Can I take the narcotic medication (i.e.: Vicodin/Norco) simultaneously with the Ibuprofen/Lodine/Etodolac?**

YES. Narcotic and Ibuprofen can be taken at the same time. It is often helpful to alternate Ibuprofen and Norco to help manage discomfort.

**What are some examples of soft foods I may eat?**

Potatoes, yogurt, oatmeal, jell-o, beans, bananas, eggs, pudding, cottage cheese, applesauce, soups, noodles, ground beef, pancakes, rice, fish, casseroles, food supplements.

**Why are there spaces between my teeth after osseous surgery treatment?**

Before treatment, my gums were swollen and infected. After treatment the gums shrink back down, are now healthy and are at the bone levels, where they were when you were healthy.

**How long should I avoid looking at/touching the treated area?**

Please avoid looking/touching the treated area until you are seen for your follow-up appointment. It can be tempting to look at the area, but this may pull on the sutures and disturb healing. Please just dap the area with the prescribed mouth rinse.

**There are pieces from the bone graft coming out that was placed, is this normal?**

YES. Superficial pieces will come out for the first few months, this is normal and expected.

**Gum grafts appear white in color, is that normal?**

YES. The white appearance is a normal stage of healing. A portion of the graft can fall out the first 5 days, which is normal.

**I have bleeding from the roof of my mouth that will not stop. What should I do?**

A small amount of bleeding from the roof of the mouth is normal after a grafting procedure. Please apply a piece of gauze or soaked black tea bag directly over the bleeding site with firm pressure for at least 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, the bleeding should be controlled. If you still have bleeding, please contact our office.

**I have a long hanging suture that is bothering me. What should I do?**

You can trim the suture with a small pair of scissors. If you are concerned, please come in and our assistant will gladly help you.

***In case of a medical emergency please call 911.***

*If this is a dental emergency please call our 24-hour answering service 630-912-2700 or call/text Dr.Gromov's cell 773-357-7077*