



## Post-Operative Care for Dental Implants

Please read through all the instructions. Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and complications such as infection and swelling can be minimized if these instructions are followed carefully. Our office will do everything possible to help you during your recovery period. Your case is unique, no two mouths are alike. If you call the office during office hours, a member of our staff will be able to assist you.

### Immediately Following Surgery

- Do not disturb the surgical area. Avoid rinsing, spitting, or touching the area on the day of surgery. You may see a metal healing abutment protruding through the gum tissue.
- Eat and take pain medicine after 2 hours or when you can tolerate eating and drinking. This will usually occur as the local wears off.
- Place the provided ice pack on the side of your face where surgery was performed on/off for the first 48 hours.
- Do not drink hot liquids and be aware of chewing while you are numb.
- Do not chew on the gauze.
- Hold slight pressure on gauze to implant area if bleeding. If the area is not bleeding no need to use gauze.
- Change gauze every 20-30 minutes until \_\_\_\_\_. Please discontinue gauze past this time.
- Eat and start pain medicine by \_\_\_\_\_. Also begin 800 mg of ibuprofen every 4 hours.
- If you received an antibiotic, please start it tonight.
- Use the provided ice packs to apply ice today and tomorrow. Switching to heat on the 3rd day.

### Bleeding

Some bleeding or redness in the saliva is normal for 24 hours. Excessive bleeding (your mouth fills rapidly with blood) can be controlled by biting on a gauze pad placed directly on the bleeding wound for 30 minutes. If bleeding continues profusely, please call for further instructions.

### Swelling

Swelling is a normal occurrence after surgery and will typically peak at the 36–48-hour mark. To minimize swelling apply an ice bag, or a plastic bag or towel filled with ice, on the cheek in the area of surgery. Apply the ice continuously, as much as possible, for the first 48 hours. After 48 hours, switch to heat by warming the ice pack in the microwave for 30 seconds. In some cases, discoloration of the skin follows swelling. This is a normal occurrence 2-3 days post operatively.

### Diet

Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid hot liquids or food. Soft food and liquids should be eaten on the day of surgery. Return to a normal diet as soon as possible unless otherwise directed.

### Pain

You should begin taking pain medication as soon as you feel the local anesthetic wearing off. For moderate pain, one or two tablets of Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol may be taken every 3-4 hours. Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) may be taken instead of Tylenol. Ibuprofen bought over the counter comes in 200 mg tablets. You may take 800 mg every 4-6 hours. For severe pain, the prescribed medication should be taken as directed. Do not take any of the above medication if you are allergic to them or have been instructed by your doctor not to take it. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Pain or discomfort following surgery should subside more and more every day. If pain persists, it may require attention and you should call the office. Be aware that some prescriptions contain Tylenol (Tylenol #3, Norco). Intake should be limited to no more than 4 grams in 24 hours.

### Activity

Keep physical activities to a minimum immediately following surgery. If you exercise, throbbing or bleeding may occur. If this occurs, you should discontinue exercising. Keep in mind that you are probably not taking in normal nourishment. This may weaken you and further limit your ability to exercise.

### Other Complications

- Sometimes the healing abutment will come loose and work its way out. If this happens don't be alarmed, it is not the implant. Call our office and we can bring you back in to let Dr. Johnson look and replace the abutment.
- If numbness of the lip, chin, or tongue occurs there is no cause for alarm. As reviewed in your consultation, this is usually temporary in nature. You should be aware that if your lip or tongue is numb, you could bite it and not feel the sensation. Call Dr. Johnson if you have any questions.

- Slight elevation of temperature immediately following surgery is not uncommon. If the temperature persists, notify the office. Tylenol or ibuprofen should be taken to reduce the fever.
- You should be careful going from the lying down position to standing. You could get lightheaded from low blood sugar or medications. Before standing up, you should sit for one minute before getting up.
- Occasionally, patients may feel hard projections in the mouth with their tongue. They are not roots; they are the bony walls which supported the tooth. These projections usually smooth out spontaneously. If not, they can be removed.
- If the corners of your mouth are stretched, they may dry out and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with an ointment such as Vaseline.
- Sore throats and pain when swallowing are not uncommon. The muscles get swollen. The normal act of swallowing can then become painful. This will subside in 2-3 days.
- As discussed in your initial exam, do not use tobacco products for at least 1 week.
- Stiffness (Trismus) of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening your mouth for a few days following surgery. This is a normal post-operative event which will resolve in time.
- Your case is unique, no two mouths are alike. Discuss any problems with our office.
- We hope that your recovery will be smooth and pleasant. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office. A 24-hour answering service is available. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern.