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Post-Operative Instructions

Good post-operative care ensures a more comfortable recovery after your procedure. Please follow these instructions carefully. Minimize talking and excessive facial movements after surgery to reduce disturbances during the early healing phase (first 24-48 hours after surgery).

Surgical Stent: If a clear plastic surgical stent has been placed in your mouth during your surgery. This is to protect the donor site from trauma and help to prevent disturbance of initial healing. **Keep the stent in for the first 24 hours after surgery.** Following the initial 24 hours, you may remove the stent to clean it. It is recommended that you use the stent while eating for the first week after surgery to prevent trauma to the area and to prevent food from becoming impacted into the wound.

Bleeding: Some bleeding is normal during the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Blood mixed with saliva looks like a lot of blood, and the bleeding will seem to be worse than it actually is. If bleeding is excessive, place firm continuous pressure against the surgical area with moistened gauze or cotton balls for 45 minutes. If the bleeding does not stop, please contact the office.

Pain: Some discomfort can be expected. Pain may be most severe the second day, but should decrease thereafter. Use the prescribed medications as directed to relieve any pain or discomfort. If the prescribed medications do not control your pain, or if the pain is increasing in severity after 2-3 days, call the office.

Swelling: Swelling and/or bruising in the area of surgery, throat, cheek and even part of your neck can be expected. It should be maximal the third day after surgery, and then start to decrease. Following surgery, an ice pack should be applied to your face over the operated area. Use the ice pack for 15 minutes on followed by 15 minutes off for the first 24 hours after surgery. This will also help to minimize post-operative pain as well as swelling. If your swelling is increasing or the area is becoming more painful after the first 48 hrs, please contact the office.

Oral Hygiene: Immediately following surgery, NO ORAL HYGIENE for the first 24 hours. The day following surgery, brush and floss as usual EXCEPT in the surgical area. Gentle rinsing of the surgical area with warm salt water (up to ½ teaspoon in 8 oz water) will help to keep the area clean after meals. Use your prescribed rinse as directed starting after the first 24 hours. Overzealous rinsing will be detrimental to healing. Do not brush the surgical area until you have been instructed to do so. NO SPITTING! **Do not use electric toothbrushes or oral irrigators (Waterpik) in the surgical area for 6 weeks following surgery.**

Surgical Dressing: If you had a surgical dressing placed, it will take several hours to fully harden. You should avoid smoking, excessive movement of the lips or cheeks and eating or drinking of warm fluids for at least 2 hours. If a small portion of the dressing breaks off and you are comfortable, you do not have to be concerned. If a large piece breaks off, or if the dressing feels loose, please contact the office.

Eating: Avoid carbonated beverages and straws until instructed. For the first 24 hours after surgery, it is best to restrict your diet to soft foods and liquids such as pasta, mashed potatoes, frozen yogurt or ice cream, smoothies without seeds (no strawberry), eggs, fish or chicken. Avoid hard crunchy, spicy, or acidic foods and foods that may pack into the surgical site (like crackers and rice). Avoid chewing in the area of the surgery.

Medications: It is important to follow the instructions that come with your prescriptions.

Analgesics (pain medication): Take as needed to control discomfort. Avoid alcohol, conducting business, use of firearms and driving whilst taking narcotic medications.

- 0.12% Chlorhexidine Gluconate Mouthwash – starting the day after surgery, use it 2x/day after rinsing gently with warm salt water.
- Vicodin or Vicodin ES (Hydrocodone)
- Percocet (Oxycodone)
- Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) 600-800mg every 6-8hrs with food or milk. Next dose is: _____
- Other _____

Antibiotics: These are used to treat or prevent infection and to protect the healing of bone grafts

- Amoxicillin
- Clindamycin
- Doxycycline
- Penicillin VK
- Metronidazole

As always, please feel free to contact the office if you have additional questions or concerns. For emergent issues outside of normal business hours you may contact Dr. Tandy on her mobile phone. The number is: **480-560-3479**