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PERIODONTICS & IMPLANT DENTISTRY

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1) ACTIVITY

After leaving the office, relax for the remainder of the day. For the next several days avoid strenuous activity and sleep with your head slightly elevated by using extra pillows. For the first 2 weeks, do NOT spit, rinse hard, drink through a straw, or create a “sucking” action.

2) MOVEMENT

Wounds heal by having tiny blood vessels grow through the area. Even small movement or pressure on the surgical area can tear these vessels and impair healing. It is important to minimize touching or any movement of the surgical area so that the healing is not impaired. This is especially important if any type of bone or tissue grafting was done.

3) CLEANING

It is important to maintain a normal level of oral hygiene in the non-operated areas by brushing and flossing. Brush the surgical area as directed. Do not use an irrigating or mechanical device (eg. water pick and electric toothbrush) on the surgical site unless explicitly directed to do so. If you were directed to clean the surgical area, the aim should be to remove plaque and not to disturb the actual wound.

4) RINSES

Begin rinsing with chlorhexidine mouth rinse in the evening one day after your surgery and continue for 2 weeks. After cleaning your teeth, carefully and gently rinse twice daily (AM and PM) for 30 seconds and then do not rinse or eat for one hour. Chlorhexidine can stain plaque on your teeth; this is easily removed by a professional cleaning. You can use other rinses, such as warm salt water, if you wish.

5) EATING

It is recommended to maintain a healthy diet throughout the course of healing. For the first 6 weeks, avoid foods that may jab or get stuck in the surgical site, such as peanuts, popcorn, tortilla chips or granola. For the first month, chewing should be done away from the surgical site as movement can disrupt proper healing. Only put small pieces of food into your mouth so you can keep the food away from the surgical area (knife+ fork diet). It may be necessary to stick to liquids for the first few days if chewing is uncomfortable.

6) IMPLANTS AND DENTURES

If you have an implant and the healing cap loosens or falls off it is not an emergency and will not affect the success of your implant. Please come to see us within 24 hours to have it replaced. If you wear a denture, it may need to be adjusted to avoid contacting the surgical area. Minimize denture wear as much as possible for the first 6 weeks after surgery if it sits near or on the surgical area.

7) TISSUE AND BONE GRAFTS

If you have a tissue graft, you may notice the graft turn white over the next few weeks. This is a normal part of the healing process. If you have a bone graft, you may notice some granules in your mouth a few days after the procedure. This is nothing to be concerned about.

8) DISCOMFORT

Some discomfort may be present when the dental anesthesia wears off. Please make sure you are taking any pain medications as directed. Pain is normal after surgical procedures and can last 2 weeks, although most patients are pain-free after 1 week. Most pain can be controlled with over-the-counter pain medication. We recommend taking 400mg Ibuprofen (Advil) and 500mg Acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4 hours as needed for pain. If you require additional pain medication, please ask and we will provide it for your comfort.

9) BLEEDING

There may be a red/pink colouring in your saliva over the next couple of days. This is normal as saliva is washing over the wound. If you find dark blood is persistently pooling in your mouth, place gauze over the bleeding area and hold firmly with general pressure for 20 minutes. Make sure you are not moving and sitting up, not lying down. If this does not help, try using a moistened tea bag in the same manner. Bleeding after surgery is rarely an emergency. It almost always stops on its own but may take several days. If you are concerned with the amount of bleeding, please call our office for further instructions.

10) BRUISING AND SWELLING

Bruising of an area on the outside of the face is normal, and can vary from patient to patient. In some cases bruising may extend down the neck or up around the eye and this is a normal part of healing. Swelling may be present the day after the surgery and may peak 5 days after surgery. This may make your jaw feel tight or prevent you from opening wide. Swelling of the area where surgery was performed is normal and can be extensive. Try to avoid ice packs, moving or touching the area. If swelling occurs in an area away from where any surgery was done, or the swelling is extremely large, please give our office a call. If you ever have ANY swelling that compromises your ability to breathe, immediately head to a nearby emergency room.

11) SUTURES

Sutures (stitches) are placed to hold the gum tissues in the proper position for healing. If a suture has come undone and is hanging, it can carefully be cut at home, although we would prefer to do this at our office. Most sutures dissolve in 10 days but may come out after 4 days or as late as 30 days.

12) MEDICATIONS

Please follow the instructions on the bottle of any medications prescribed. If any adverse reaction to those medications should arise, such as nausea, itching, bloating, diarrhea or other symptoms, please discontinue the medication and contact our office. If you ever have ANY difficulty in breathing due to an allergic reaction, immediately head to a nearby emergency room.

13) SMOKING

Please prolong the time until your next cigarette.

Smoking will impair the ability of oral wounds to heal due to the poisons naturally found in smoking products. Wounds are vulnerable to these poisons when they are newer, so it is important to avoid smoking for 2 weeks after a surgical procedure. Try to give the wound as much time as you can before exposing it to smoking products. Healing results are significantly worse in smokers than in non-smokers.

14) ALCOHOL

Alcohol can increase or decrease the effects of medication or may cause nausea and sickness in combination. Alcohol also can impair wound healing. For these reasons, it is recommended to minimize alcohol consumption for the first 2 weeks after surgery.

15) SINUS INSTRUCTIONS

If your sinus has been involved in a surgery, avoid any air pressure inside your nasal cavity or mouth. Try to avoid sniffing or blowing your nose and instead gently wipe your nose if needed. In some cases when sneezing, people hold in their sneeze causing pressure in their sinus. Please avoid this and sneeze directly out of your mouth. Do not use a straw or create suction forces with your mouth.

16) PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS?

Our office number is 416-243-5215.