

POSTOPERATIVE SURGICAL INSTRUCTIONS

Immediately after surgery, keep gauze pads over area with biting pressure for 1 to 2 hours. It is normal for some oozing of blood to occur for 24 hours. You may wish to place an old towel over your pillow to prevent staining of your bed linens. It is common for a little blood to mix with your saliva and leak out of your mouth while sleeping. Do not be alarmed if you wake up and see a red stain on your bed linens, it is mostly saliva. You may wish to sleep with your head elevated (2 or 3 pillows). This will minimize any bleeding you may have.

Some procedures will result in swelling. Swelling is the body's normal reaction to surgery, and it can be minimized by applying an ice bag for 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off, over the surgical area, for the first 8 hours after surgery. The day after the surgery we recommend moist heat to help improve the circulation and help the swelling to decrease. (Do not use heat if you are still bleeding). A good way to produce moist heat, is to use a warm washcloth. Moist heat should be applied 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off.

Nourishment is very important for a quick and easy recovery. Try and keep your fluid intake up. Soups, juices, ice cream, yogurt, and milkshakes are good. For the first 24 hours, try to avoid carbonated beverages and smoking. If it does not hurt to eat something, it is probably OK to eat it.

Do not forget to take medicines, which you normally take. If you have been given pain medication you may wish to take it before the local anesthetic wears off. It is easier to prevent pain, than to make it go away. Sometimes the pain medication will make you nauseated. This is a normal side effect from any narcotic pain reliever. To prevent nausea, take your medicine with a little food. Also sit or lie down, since motion will make the nausea worse. If the nausea persists, decrease the dose, or the frequency of the pain medicine, or stop taking it completely.

24 Hours after surgery, if you have stopped bleeding, you may begin to rinse with warm salt water. Use ½ teaspoon of salt in a drinking glass of warm water. You may also begin to brush your teeth as much as possible without disturbing the surgical area.

You should start to improve every day after the surgery. If you do not, you may have a "dry socket" or an infection. If you think you may have a problem, do not hesitate to CALL ME. When we are not in the office, the answering machine is turned on. If you listen to the instructions, you will be able to page me. All you have to do, is to leave your name and number and I will return your call as soon as possible