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GENERAL POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR TOOTH EXTRACTION

Please follow instructions as designated, doing so will add to your comfort and hasten your recovery.

Anesthesia often leaves the lips, teeth, tongue, and even the nasal area numb after an oral operation: **avoid chewing and hot liquids** until numbness wears off to prevent accidental injury. Taking **ibuprofen or Tylenol** prior to completely the local anesthesia wears off can significantly reduce pain and swelling. **Temperature and pressure sensitivity**, as well as **gum soreness**, is to be expected in the days after your procedure.

After a tooth extraction, it is crucial that a blood clot form in the extraction socket. Do not smoke, drink through a straw, or rinse forcefully for at least 5-7 days after the procedure. Drink directly from the glass or use a spoon.

Some bleeding following oral surgery is to be expected and slight oozing may persist for the first 24-48 hours after surgery. *Firm pressure* applied over the surgical area(s) with gauze or a moistened tea bag will control the bleeding. Do not chew on the gauze. If bleeding starts again, put gauze, a clean white cloth, or a damp teabag over the bleeding area and bite on it with firm, steady pressure for one hour. Do not chew on it. Do not take aspirin or aspirin products, since they may prolong bleeding. If pressure on the surgical site does not control bleeding please call your doctor.

Some degree of swelling and discomfort following the surgery is to be expected. Discoloration and a slight stiffness of the jaw can be normal post-operative events. Do not be alarmed, swelling is expected to peak on the third day and may last for several days.

Good nutrition must be maintained following oral surgery. PLENTY of liquids are needed at first, and the diet should be increased to soft or regular foods as soon as you are able. Do not miss meals, even though soreness and jaw stiffness may be present. Examples of food which you may consume following oral surgery are: non-acidic juices, smoothies, ice cream, puddings, yogurt, Jell-O®, soup broth, scrambled eggs, pureed or blended foods.

Use the prescribed medication as directed for pain. It is recommended your first dose of pain medication be taken before the anesthetic wears off to help control postoperative discomfort more effectively. The following is safe and effective pain control method:

- Alternate between:
 - Acetaminophen/APAP (325 or 500mg)
 - Ibuprofen (200-800mg mg per capsule/tablet) or ASA 325mg
 - Take the medications 3-4 hours apart as needed for pain.
- If you experience breakthrough pain take the prescribed narcotic medication (Tylenol with codeine, Hydrocodone, Oxycodone) as directed for pain not controlled as above.
- Please note that the most narcotic formulations have 500mg of acetaminophen (Norco has 325mg of APAP). Therefore, factor that in when calculating your maximum daily dose of APAP.
 - Please note: The maximum daily healthy **adult dose** of acetaminophen (Tylenol) is 4000mg under direction of health care provider.
 - The maximum daily healthy adult dose of Ibuprofen is 3200mg.

Good hygiene is important for normal healing. You can brush teeth unaffected by the surgery, along with gentle tooth brushing of the teeth adjacent to the surgical area. Avoid undue irritation to the surgical site. Do not begin mouth rinses until the first day following surgery; at that time use ¼ teaspoon of salt in an 8-ounce glass of warm water 4-6 times a day.

Oral surgical procedures are often accompanied by facial swelling and this should not be cause for alarm. A noticeable increase in this swelling may occur during the second or third post-operative day and is expected. You may help minimize the swelling by applying an ice bag on the face 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off until bedtime the night of surgery, then discontinue. The day after surgery and for several days after, moist, warm heat applied over swelling can be helpful. You may also consider using *Arnica Montana*, a natural supplement; it has been used medicinally for centuries to help reduce postoperative swelling, pain and bruising. Side effects are benign and limited to local redness or slight burning sensation. It is available over the counter. *Apply to the skin of the face over the surgical site 3-4x daily. Do not apply orally or over broken skin.*

Resting with the head slightly elevated the first one to two days following surgery will make your post-operative course more comfortable. Avoid physical exertion or exercise the day of surgery. Increase your activity level as tolerated.

Sutures (stitches) may have been used to repair the surgical site. They will generally dissolve in 5-7 days. However, it is common for the sutures to loosen or become dislodged in 2-3 days or remain beyond 7 days; this is acceptable and should not be cause for concern.

A white area will likely form in the region of the surgical site, this is part of the normal healing process and does not constitute an infection.

After an extraction the tooth socket (hole in the jaw) will remain open for 4-6 weeks. This is part of the normal healing process. Keep the socket clean of food particles by rinsing with water after each meal until the socket is closed.

Antibiotics can sometimes render birth control pills less effective. If you have been prescribed an antibiotic and you are on birth control pills, use an additional method of contraception for the remainder of your current menstrual cycle.

Lactobacillus acidophilus (Bacid) is a probiotic that has been used to re-establish the normal consistency of bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract (stomach and intestines) and vagina. Antibiotics kill bacteria, but don't discriminate between "friendly" and "unfriendly" microorganisms, so the balance between good and bad bacteria in the intestines and vagina can be upset resulting in diarrhea or vaginitis. It is thought that taking probiotics helps restore the healthy balance of bacteria. While taking an antibiotic you may choose to take a probiotic, generally 2 capsules 2-4 times a day or use as directed on the product packaging.

If you have received any sedative or general anesthetic for your oral surgery, you should not drive any vehicle or attempt any hazardous tasks the day of surgery.

Many surgical procedures require the use of pain medication post-operatively which can make you drowsy, therefore, do not drive while taking such medicine.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office at 881-1130 during regular office hours. After office hours a 24-hour answering service is available to contact your doctor. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern.

Important Safety Tips:

1. Never take an opioid pain reliever unless it is prescribed for you.
2. Always take opioids as directed. Do not take more opioid or take it more often than is prescribed for you.
3. Do not use opioids with alcohol or other drugs unless approved by your prescriber.
4. Protect and lock up your opioids in a safe place at all times, and properly dispose of leftover medicine.

5. Never share opioids with another person; it is illegal and very dangerous.
6. Be prepared for opioid emergencies. Know signs of trouble and what to do.
7. Always read instructions that come with your opioid prescription. Contact your prescriber or pharmacist with any questions.

Guidelines for Drug Disposal

Follow any specific disposal instructions on the drug label or patient information that accompanies the medication. ***Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet unless this information specifically instructs you to do so.***

- Take advantage of community drug take-back programs that allow the public to bring unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal. Call your city or county government's household trash and recycling service (see blue pages in phone book) to see if a take-back program is available in your community. The Drug Enforcement Administration, working with state and local law enforcement agencies, is sponsoring National Prescription Drug Take Back Days (www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov) throughout the United States.

- Consider taking unused drugs to the Drug disposal center 5350 2nd St NW, Phone: (505) 823-4200. Otherwise throw the unused drugs in your household trash by the following method:

- Take them out of their original containers and mix them with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter. The medication will be less appealing to children and pets, and unrecognizable to people who may intentionally go through your trash.

- Put them in a sealable bag, empty can, or other container to prevent the medication from leaking or breaking out of a garbage bag.

- Before throwing out a medicine container, scratch out all identifying information on the prescription label to make it unreadable. This will help protect your identity and the privacy of your personal health information.

- Do not give medications to friends. Doctors prescribe drugs based on a person's specific symptoms and medical history. A drug that works for you could be dangerous for someone else.

- When in doubt about proper disposal, talk to your pharmacist.

PLEASE NOTE: telephone calls for narcotic (pain killer) prescription renewal is ONLY accepted during office hours.

A Professional association devoted to the practice of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (10-13)