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Joshua M. Hethcox Periodontics, P.C.

INSTRUCTIONS AFTER YOUR PERIODONTAL SURGERY

Please read and follow these instructions carefully.

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. You can stop bleeding in the mouth by applying pressure with gauze over the surgery site for 30 minutes. Take a gauze or two and fold them up to fit in the area bleeding and then bite down to apply pressure. It is also important to keep your head elevated when sitting or lying down so blood does not pool in your head.

Pain: Some discomfort can be expected. Pain may be most severe the second day, but should decrease thereafter. You will more than likely be prescribed a narcotic pain medication to treat moderate to severe pain. Use the prescribed medications as directed to relieve any pain or discomfort. If the prescribed medications do not control your pain, or the pain is increasing in severity after 2-3 days, call Dr. Hethcox. I strongly recommend taking this medication before bed the first night to aid in sleep and prevent waking up in pain. There are restrictions on your activity when taking a narcotic, so if you cannot take the narcotic during the day you may take over-the-counter pain medicine (Ibuprofen is best, Tylenol is okay). One way to control more severe pain with over-the-counter medication is to alternate the 2 varieties; take 400-800 mg of ibuprofen and then 2 capsules of Tylenol 4 hours later and then 400-800 mg of ibuprofen 4 hours after that, you should be alternating the 2 medications every 4 hours.

Swelling: Swelling in the area of surgery, throat, cheek and even part of your neck can be expected. It should peak about the third day after surgery, and then start to decrease. If the swelling is not decreasing after 4 days call Dr. Hethcox. Following surgery, an ice pack can be applied to your face over the operated area for 10-15 minutes increments throughout the first 24 hours.

Oral Hygiene: Please brush and floss as usual EXCEPT in the surgical area or the area of the surgical dressing. If a dressing is placed, do NOT brush the dressing as it may dislodge. Frequent gentle rinsing of the surgical area with warm salt water or any prescribed mouthrinse will help to keep the area clean and aid healing. Use any prescribed rinses as directed.

Surgical Dressing: If you had a surgical dressing placed, it will take several hours to fully harden. The dressing along with the sutures will be removed at your next appointment. If any portion of the dressing breaks off you do not have to be concerned or come back to the office to have it replaced.

Eating: For the first 3-5 days after surgery, it is best to restrict your diet to soft foods and liquids (examples: mashed potatoes, pasta, pudding, yogurt, shakes, soups). Thereafter, a normal diet may be followed, but avoid chewing in the area of the surgery. Good nutrition is paramount to good healing – EAT WELL AND STAY HYDRATED!

Exercise: It is best to avoid exercise or strenuous activity for the first 5-7 days after surgery. Once you have completed this initial healing, you may begin exercise again. I recommend not going back to your routine at full strength, but ease into it over a couple of days.

Smoking: Smoking delays healing and can prevent treatment success, so avoid smoking during the healing phase.

Sinus Lifts: Expect more swelling and possibly bruising under the eye. You may experience a nosebleed in the first 24 hours after surgery. Do not blow your nose or hold a sneeze in.