



## POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING WISDOM TEETH REMOVAL

### 1. GENERAL

You have undergone a surgical procedure involving the bone and soft tissue of your mouth, and there are several postoperative events of which you should be aware. Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of the instructions may apply to you. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification.

- **BLEEDING:** The incision utilized to gain access to the surgical area has usually been closed with dissolvable sutures. After maintaining pressure with absorbent gauze, the gauze may be discarded. If there is some continued bleeding, repeat this procedure. Change the gauze every 20 to 60 minutes for the next 4 to 5 hours following surgery. Bleeding should never be severe. If so, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between the teeth only and are not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a black tea bag (soaked in water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in gauze) for 20 or 30 minutes.
- **DISCOMFORT:** Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. The third or fourth day after surgery is often the peak of swelling and discomfort. This is normal and to be expected. Dr. Reid has prescribed pain medication for you, which you should take as directed. Please take your first dose of pain medication prior to the numbness subsiding. Consume a small amount of food prior to any type of pain medication in order to reduce the risk of upset stomach. Our recommended regimen of pain medication is as follows: **Ibuprofen 600mg and Tylenol 500mg every 6 hours for the first 72 hours after your procedure.** Narcotic pain medications can be used to treat breakthrough pain on an as needed basis. If you consume Narcotic pain medication be aware that it contains Tylenol also. Do not consume greater than 3000mg of Tylenol in a 24-hour period.
- **SWELLING :** Moderate swelling is to be expected and need not cause alarm. It is nature's response to a surgical intervention. It can be minimized by using a cold pack, ice bag, or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the first 48 hours after surgery. After the first 48 hours, if an external application is desired, discontinue the ice and use moist heat or heating pad. This enhances circulation to the area and helps excess tissue fluids to be carried off. Swelling usually resolves in four to five days. Sleep with an extra pillow, keeping head elevated.

### 2. DIET

During the first few days, your diet should be modified to include soft foods and plentiful liquids. An effort should be made to keep food away from the operated area. Avoid extremely hot foods. It is best to avoid foods like nuts, seeds, popcorn etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas. Good nutrition must be maintained following oral surgery even if mouth soreness and jaw stiffness are present. Since you will be taking medications, it is important to remember that eating can prevent nausea sometimes associated with certain medications.

The first day or two foods like Yogurt, pudding, Jello-O®, milkshakes, ice cream, oatmeal, Ensure®, soups, baby food and pureed foods, fish, chicken, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, and cooked vegetables can be added to your diet as your comfort indicates. There is no reason to avoid your favorite foods if you are comfortable while eating them.

Advance to your regular diet as quickly as you are able.

### **3. SHARP EDGES**

If you feel something hard or sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling the bony walls which once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

### **4. MOUTH RINSES AND BRUSHING**

Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential to your healing process. After the first day, gentle saline rinses (1/2 level teaspoon of salt to an 8oz. glass of warm water) or the prescribed chlorhexidine rinse should be utilized three to four times a day, especially following meals. You need to do these rinses for 7 to 10 days. Teeth may be brushed as usual, but care should be taken in the surgical area. Begin your normal oral hygiene routine after 24 hours following surgery to minimize inflammation and risk of infection. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make an effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

\*If you were given a **Monoject Syringe, do NOT use this until 7 days AFTER** the procedure. It is critical that gentle care be taken with the extraction sites for the first week.

### **5. ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS**

If after 5 to 7 days following the surgery, the discomfort becomes greater rather than less, you may have developed a dry socket. This means that the blood clot has been lost from the socket where the tooth was. Please call the office and we can treat you for this. To prevent a dry socket:

- Do not smoke for a minimum of 3 days
- Do not use drinking straws
- Do not spit repeatedly
- Do not rinse or brush for the first 24 hours
- Do not play with the area with your tongue
- Do not use Peroxide
- Do not drink carbonated beverages for a minimum of 3 days

In lower jaw surgery, if it has been necessary to operate deep in the bone, the patient may experience manipulation of the main nerve to the lower jaw. Should this occur, the nerve usually repairs itself, and this process may take anywhere from several weeks to four to six months. If you do experience any numbness of the lower lip or tongue, please inform Dr. Reid.

### **6. SUMMARY**

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 our office. A 24-hour answering service is available to assist you. Should you need care following surgery, you may contact Dr. Reid by calling our office number.

Surgery of any type temporarily interrupts normal activities, and oral surgery is no exception.

Attention to Dr. Reid's instructions, and the information presented here should be helpful. In addition, carefully following your prescriptions, limited activity, rest and patience should see you through.

### **7. PRESCRIPTIONS AND/OR ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

**If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the doctor at: 970-449-0824**