



Dental Implants

Dental implants are a serious surgical procedure. Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully.

Pre-Operative Instructions: Prior to Your Surgery

THREE DAYS PRIOR: If you have been prescribed oral sedation (a pill to relax you for your procedure) please pick up the prescription and sign any consent forms necessary at your prescribing office.

DAY OF SURGERY: Eat a small meal and take all of your regular medications as prescribed by your doctor (unless you have been instructed specifically not to take a medication). If you have been prescribed oral sedation please make sure you have a driver to bring you to and from your appointment.

Post-Operative Instructions: After your surgery

REST: Quiet rest these next several hours will ensure early, comfortable and complete healing. Always get up slowly to prevent dizziness, limit physical activity, keep your head elevated the remainder of the day. Expect to need more rest for the next several days than usual. For the next week, avoid heavy exertion and exercise, and avoid brushing the dental implant site directly during this time. These steps will reduce bleeding, and also reduce the risk of damaging the blood clots around your new implant. After 2 weeks, most patients are recovered. The implant site may feel slightly tender to the touch, but should feel healed and normal.

PAIN CONTROL: Severity of postoperative pain will depend on the procedure and your physical condition. Expect to have discomfort when the anesthetic wears off. We suggest that you take a pain reliever before the numbness begins to wear off so that the transition will be smooth. When you begin to feel the first signs of pain, take another pain reliever as long as you are within the guidelines printed on the bottle or as we discussed. For minor discomfort you may use the Ibuprofen/Tylenol mixed dosing regimen if your primary doctor allows that medication use. If you are prescribed pain medication, you can switch to your prescribed pain medication if needed. Please stop the Ibuprofen/Tylenol regimen at that time. *** Do not consume alcohol while on pain medication. It is normal to experience a slight feeling of weakness or chills during the first day or two after surgery. This is part of the body's defense mechanism and is not cause for alarm.

ANTIBIOTICS: If you were prescribed an antibiotic, take it conscientiously as directed until all are gone; stopping antibiotics in the middle can actually do more harm than good.

DRESSING/BLEEDING: Keep your fingers and tongue away from the surgical area. Keep the pressure sponge over the operation site by biting for the prescribed time (at least one hour). If bleeding continues, place issued gauze sponges over the implant area and hold firmly for one additional hour. Repeat once again if needed. If this does not control bleeding, please contact the office. NOTE: Often there is slight oozing of blood which when mixed with saliva, appears to be excessive bleeding. Do not be alarmed. Put an old towel or old pillowcase over the pillow tonight. Saliva might be pink for the next day or so.

SMOKING: We strongly advise against SMOKING after surgery. Smoking delays the healing, increases discomfort, and may encourage bleeding and infection at the surgical site.

SWELLING: Swelling can be expected. Swelling peaks on the second or third postoperative day. It is not unusual to develop bruising in the area of implant placement. After about a day or two, your implant site should no longer be bleeding significantly, either. An ice bag can be used to reduce it. Use 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for 24 hours to help prevent excessive swelling and discomfort.

ORAL HYGIENE: Avoid spitting or sucking (straw use or smoking) for 7 days following surgery. Gradually progress with brushing. Brush your remaining teeth regularly. Cleanliness is essential to optimal healing. Don't brush the implant site directly for at least a week. After 48hrs, use a gentle warm salt water rinse following meals for the first week to flush out particles of food and debris that may lodge in the surgical area. (Mix ½ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water.)

DIET INSTRUCTIONS: Your diet should consist mainly of soft, easily swallowed foods and cool drinks. Avoid anything that might get stuck in your teeth, so no seeds, nuts, rice, popcorn, or similar foods. Do not stop taking nourishment. Keep up on your fluid intake. Do not drink carbonated drinks (i.e., soda pop, etc) for the first 24-hours. After about 3 days, you can usually start eating slightly firmer foods like pasta and rice, in addition to liquid and soft foods. You should still avoid hard and crunchy foods for a week or longer.

MUSCLE STIFFNESS: Difficulty in opening your mouth widely and discomfort upon swallowing should be anticipated. You may have a slight earache. A sore throat may develop. Your other teeth may ache temporarily. This is referred pain and is a temporary condition. If the corners of the mouth are stretched out, they may dry and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with cream or ointment.

NUMBNESS: Quite infrequently the patient will notice a persistent numb sensation following surgery. Numbness of the lips and/or tongue on the affected side may be experienced for a variable period of time. It is usually temporary in nature, however, it is advisable that the numbness be reported to your Dentist. If the discomfort associated with the surgery site does not improve over a period of three or four days, call the dental office.

POST-OPERATIVE VISITS: If a postoperative visit is scheduled, we will remove any sutures that were placed. Although the gums will be on the road to healing, important healing continues under the gum line for several months. This visit is short and you should expect little, if any discomfort. You will be scheduled at this time for any additional appointments that may be required in your treatment phase. After 3-6 months, the doctor will examine the implant site and determine if you are ready for restoration with your general dentist. Once you are released, you are to contact your general dentist to get fitted for your implant crown.

If you have any questions please call: 239-445-6318

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