

## **Home Care Instructions Following Dental Surgery**

**To insure rapid healing and to avoid complications that could be both harmful and painful to you, please follow these instructions carefully.**

- **BLEEDING:** To prevent unnecessary bleeding, maintain gentle pressure over the surgical site(s) by biting on moist gauze. You have been given a supply of gauze pads. If more are needed, they can be purchased at a drug store or supermarket. A tea bag which has been moistened is also effective. Pressure should be continued for 1-2 hours or until most of the bleeding has stopped. It is not unusual to have some slight oozing for up to 24 hours. Do not engage in strenuous physical activity since this may stimulate bleeding.
- **MEDICATIONS:** Unless you already have your medications, pick them up very soon and take as directed. Frequently with oral surgery a long acting anesthetic is used especially if bone is removed. This prevents pain but may also prolong numbness. Take a pain pill when you first feel discomfort or as your doctor had instructed. If you were given a sedative medication (such as Valium) do not drive for at least 24 hours after surgery.
- **EATING:** It is important to get adequate nutrition after surgery to help the healing process. Just drink liquid food supplements or juices and eat soft foods today. Progress to harder foods as healing progresses.
- **ICE PACKS:** To help prevent swelling, ice packs should be applied to the face adjacent to the surgery sites, this is especially important if bone was removed. Ice is not particularly useful after the first day. With most oral surgery swelling peaks at 48 hours and then goes down. Significant swelling beyond this time period could indicate infection. If this occurs call the office.
- **RINSING AND BRUSHING:** It is extremely important during the first 72 hours that you do not smoke, spit, or drink through a straw. If teeth were removed, it could lead to a dry socket. After 24 hours, rinse with Listerine, Scope or warm salty water 3-4 times a day for 4-5 days.

**Call our office if you have any of the following: Excessive bleeding, swelling, persistent and severe pain, fever or if you have a reaction to prescribed medications.**