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POST SURGICAL INSTRUCTIONS

TO REDUCE PAIN:

Start taking pain medications as soon as possible.

Start taking your pain medications as soon as possible after your dental visit. It is easier to keep pain away than to relieve it after it has started. Therefore, begin this medication before the numbness wears off. Continue taking the pain medication for the first day following the surgery and follow the label directions. The second day, you may take the prescription pain medication at your own discretion. Your pain medication may make you drowsy. Therefore, do not drive a car, operate heavy equipment, watch small children, or mix with alcohol or other pain medications.

TO REDUCE SWELLING:

Start ice pack as soon as possible.

Place an ice pack on the outside cheek or jaw over the area of surgery. Keep the pack on the area for ten minutes, then off for ten minutes. Repeat this as much as possible for the first eight hours after the surgery. Mild heat may be applied over any sore muscles. However, no heat should be applied to the surgery area for the first eight hours.

TO REDUCE BLEEDING:

Keep the gauze on the surgery site for one hour after surgery.

A moist gauze pack may have been placed over the area of surgery to control bleeding. Apply a gentle, not hard, biting pressure on the gauze for one hour. Usually bleeding stops after one hour and a gauze is not needed again. However, if at any time after the first hour bleeding resumes, then moisten a few sterile gauze and fold over the surgery site. Bite or hold gentle pressure on the pack for as many hours as it takes to stop the bleeding. It is normal to have small amounts of blood mixed in your saliva for a few hours after surgery and this requires no treatment. If you have bled enough to fill a small paper cup, this is important enough to contact the dental office immediately. If you're out of reach of the office, seek immediate help at an emergency facility. These occasions are rare.

EATING:

Eat soft food for the first day.

Eat soft foods for the next 24 hours. Chew away from the surgery site for the first five days.

SUTURES:

If sutures have been placed after your surgery, they should be removed seven to ten days later.

Occasionally, sutures will work loose before the week is passed and usually this is not harmful. It is important that you inform our office of any suture loss to determine if they need replacement. If significant bleeding occurs with their loss, you must contact the office immediately or reach an emergency medical facility. In any case you will need to return for your post surgical exam seven to ten days after surgery.

TO PREVENT DRY SOCKET:

Do not smoke or draw hard on anything, e.g. straws.

Smoking, vigorous rinsing or drawing hard on a straw may pull the blood clot out of the surgery site and can cause the painful condition called "dry socket." Refrain from these activities for one week following surgery.

TO PREVENT INFECTION:

Take antibiotics until gone.

Not all surgeries require antibiotic treatment. However, if you're instructed to take antibiotics, be sure to take them as instructed. Infection may persist even after there is no pain or swelling. If you are a woman taking birth control pills, you need to use an additional form of birth control beginning the day you start your antibiotics and continuing until you start your next menstrual.

CLEANING YOUR TEETH:

No cleaning for twelve hours.

Avoid tooth brushing, vigorous rinsing of your mouth or hard spitting for the first 12 hours after surgery. After 12 hours, you may resume gentle brushing but avoid brushing on the surgery site. You may resume normal brushing when the surgery site becomes comfortable or at least after five days.

REST:

Rest as much as possible for the next 48 hours.

Do not participate in any vigorous physical activity or lift any heavy objects for the first two days following the surgery.