

# Self Care After Dental/Implant Surgery

## **Bleeding**

- Bite firmly on gauze for 1 hour, and then remove it gently. Replace with new *damp gauze if needed*.
- If bleeding begins again, place damp gauze or damp tea bag directly over the surgery area and bite firmly until the bleeding stops.
- Some blood may ooze from the surgery area for a day or two, which is normal. If bleeding continues, contact the office.

## **Discomfort**

- Some discomfort is normal after surgery but can be controlled by medication prescribed by the dentist.
- Follow the prescription as advised by your dentist and the directions written on the container. If the medication is not strong enough please contact the office.

## **Diet**

- It is important to drink plenty of fluids (avoid alcohol) and eat regular meals as soon as possible after surgery. Soft food such as pudding, yogurt, ice cream, mashed potatoes and scrambled eggs may be the most comfortable to start with. If you have trouble eating drinking a nutritional drink such as Boost or Ensure and available at your local drug store.

## **Oral Hygiene**

- **DO NOT RINSE WITH ANY TYPE OF LIQUID** for one week EXCEPT if PRESCRIBED by doctor, as after surgery as it may interfere with the blood clot formation, which is vital to the healing process. Rinsing may also wash away any bone grafting material that may have been placed.
- Continue to brush your teeth but avoid the area of surgery. After brushing simply let the water to fall from your mouth,
- **DO NOT SMOKE** for 7 days because it promotes infection, bleeding and interferes with healing.
- **DO NOT SPIT** or suck through a straw, since this promotes bleeding

## **Numbness**

- There may be residual numbness after surgery which should disappear within a few weeks and generally is not permanent.

## **Swelling**

- Swelling after surgery is a normal body reaction. It reaches its maximum 36 to 48 hours after surgery and usually lasts 4-6 days. To help control the swelling **APPLY ICE** over the surgical area **for the first 24 hour (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off)**.

**Bruising**

- You may experience some mild bruising around the surgical area. This response is normal for some people and should not cause you any alarm. The bruising will disappear in a week or two.

**Stiffness**

- After surgery you may experience jaw muscle stiffness and limited opening of your mouth, this is normal and should improve in 5 to 10 days.

**Stitches**

- If stitches have been placed, you **MAY** need to have them removed in 7 to 14 days and an appointment should be made.
- Dissolving sutures may have been used and usually take 4-6 days to disappear.
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**Rest**

- Avoid strenuous activity for the first 24 hours.

**Bone Grafts**

- It is normal to find some small white, sand like particles if a bone graft has been placed.

**Problems**

- If you have any problem or questions please call your dental office as soon as possible or the emergency clinic in your areas (under Dental Emergency services in your local white pages) One location is at Yonge and St Clair in Toronto at 416-485-7121.