

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

**Day of Surgery:** **PLEASE TEXT DR. JOHNSON AFTER 5PM @213-538-8841**

**General:** Limit your activity for several hours. Be sure to have someone assisting your care at home. Do not drive or operate heavy machinery if you have received sedation or general anesthesia. **Sleep with your head elevated on 2-3 pillows.** You may want to use older pillowcases in case you bleed during the night. Do not do vigorous exercise for 2-3 days after surgery or in any way increase blood flow to your head. **Do not consume alcohol or tobacco for seven days after surgery.** Alcohol is dangerous when consumed with pain medication and can delay the healing process; tobacco also delays the healing process, the suction created by smoking will displace the forming blood clots, and tobacco usage frequently causes dry sockets.

**Bleeding:** Place small rolls of gauze over your wounds (not between your teeth) and bite firmly for a few hours after surgery to control the bleeding and allow the sites to begin to clot. Change gauze as needed (usually once every 45 minutes to an hour). Some oozing is expected, but this should subside in 24-48 hours. Do not be alarmed if your saliva is pink – one drop of blood will color all your saliva. Only heavy bleeding is a cause for concern.

**Nausea:** Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food and taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep drinking clear fluids and reduce the dose of pain medication. Ginger Ale may help with nausea.

**Swelling:** Swelling after surgery can vary from minor to extensive. To minimize swelling, apply the ice packs to your cheeks. Alternate the ice for 15 minutes on, then 5-10 minutes off. Continue for 36 hours. **Swelling will peak 36 hours after surgery.** Around 36 hours after surgery, you may start to apply moist heat to the side of your face, just as you did the ice packs. Swelling will begin to decrease after the third day after surgery and should subside 7-10 days after surgery.

**Medication:** Follow the instructions given by Dr. Johnson.

**Oral Hygiene:** **You may brush your front teeth as normal but avoid touching the extraction sites.** The toothbrush bristles will irritate the wound and may cause an infection. You may not rinse or use mouthwash the first day. Around 24 hours after surgery, you may **begin to soak your surgical wounds gently with warm salt water (½ c. water, ½ tsp. salt) every two hours** to keep the area clean of infection until the gums have healed in about a week. Start brushing your teeth after meals. Be cautious when brushing – avoid direct contact between the toothbrush and the surgical area for the first 3-4 days.

**Diet:** Eat only soft, bland foods; you may progress to room temperature foods the day after surgery, and warm foods the day after that. Do not return to normal eating habits and foods (especially fried, spicy foods) until a week has passed. Avoid extremely hot foods. **Do not use a straw for the first few days after surgery.** It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, pudding, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.) It is best to avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you may gradually progress to solid foods. It is important to NOT skip meals

**Exercises:** **Do 8 reps of the following 8 times per day. Open-close, side-side and front –back.**

**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 at **949-347-9990.**

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