

After Periodontal Surgery

Do not disturb the surgical site. Avoid forcefully rinsing, spitting or touching the surgical site on the day of surgery.

Bleeding

Some bleeding or redness in the saliva is normal for the first 24 hours. Keep your head elevated slightly rather than lying flat. Vigorous rinsing and forceful spitting tend to prolong or increase bleeding. Excessive bleeding (your mouth fills up rapidly with blood) can be controlled by biting on a gauze pad placed directly on the surgical site for 30 minutes. If bleeding continues please call our office during working hours .

Medications

You will have a schedule provided by us on how to take your medications. This is an important part of your recovery process. Take medications with a full glass of water at room temperature. For most medications, it is preferable to have food before taking. Let us know if any of the medications disagree with you in any way.

Pain

For moderate pain, one or two tablets of acetaminophen (Tylenol or extra strength Tylenol) may be taken every four hours, or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), three 200 mg tablets may be taken every six hours. Do not take any medication if you are allergic or if you have been instructed by your doctor not to take it. For severe pain, take the prescribed tablets as directed. The prescribed pain medication will make you groggy and will slow down your reflexes. The doctor may advise alternating over the counter pain medications with the prescribed medications. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Pain or discomfort following surgery usually peaks at the third post-operative day and should subside more and more each day after. If pain persists, it may require attention and you should call the office.

Antibiotics

Be sure to take any prescribed antibiotics as directed. Do not take any medication if you are allergic or have been instructed by your doctor not to take it. If you are childbearing age and are on birth control pills, know that antibiotics may interfere with their effectiveness. Please take additional birth control precautions if this is the case.

Oral Hygiene

Good oral hygiene is essential to good healing. The day after surgery, warm salt water rinses (teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) can be used 4-5 times a day and is best after meals. You may also be prescribed a mouth rinse to use twice a day after surgery. This usually speeds up the healing and provides a comfortable feeling to your tissues. Brushing your teeth and the healing caps is not a problem with an ultra soft hand toothbrush. Be gentle with brushing the surgical areas. Do not use your electric toothbrush until healing has progressed enough and you are advised at our office to do so.

Swelling

Swelling and Bruising is common but comes with varying degrees depending on your procedure and postoperative care. The use of ice packs (on the day of surgery) will help diminish the swelling you would otherwise experience in the next 48-72 hours. Applying ice for 15-20 minutes followed by resting the same amount of time works very well. If you have 2 surgical sites alternate between them. Bruising may occur and is not unusual.

Diet

Drink plenty of fluids. Start with clear fluids and advance as you can tolerate them. Products like Gatorade, Boost and Ensure are good for most patients. Advance promptly to food that is warm not hot. Stay away from spicy foods. Also avoid sharp and crunchy foods like tacos, chips and nuts. Having food frequently and good nutrition after surgery will help your healing process.

Activity

Keep physical activities to a minimum immediately following surgery. Avoid exercise for one week following surgery. If you are considering exercise, throbbing or bleeding may occur. If this occurs, you should discontinue exercising. Keep in mind that you are probably not taking your usual nourishment. This may weaken you further and limit your ability to exercise.

Surgical Bandage and Sutures

If a surgical bandage was used, it is desirable for it to remain in place for one week. Do not remove it; just let it come off when it is ready. If it does not come off, we will remove it during your post-operative visit. If the surgical bandage comes off, do not place it back in position. At that point begin cleaning the wound gently with a cotton swab dipped in the medicated mouth rinse prescribed. Sutures are expected to remain in place until you return to the office for your post-operative visit approximately 7-10 days after surgical treatment.

Tobacco and Alcohol

Tobacco and Alcohol should not be used. Smoking is an irritant and will decrease the benefits to you from surgery. It also will slow down the healing process. Alcohol should not be used in combination with pain medications and it also can inhibit the effectiveness of any antibiotics prescribed.