

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY

- Gauze has been placed over your surgical wound. Bite firmly to apply pressure on the wound and replace the gauze as needed. After 30 minutes, the gauze should be removed and discarded.
- Avoid vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the wounds to prevent bleeding.
- An ice pack can be used to reduce swelling. Apply an ice pack for 30 minutes every hour for up to 24 hours after your surgery. Do not use an ice pack constantly. Always keep a cloth between your skin and the ice pack.
- It is safe to drink after surgery. Start with clear, noncarbonated fluids. Start eating soft foods as you feel comfortable.

HOME CARE

ORAL HYGIENE

- Keep your mouth as clean as possible to ensure proper healing and avoid infection.
- Brush your teeth daily when waking up, after meals, and before going to sleep. Avoid brushing directly on the surgical site until it has healed.
- Rinse gently with warm salt water **starting 24 hours** after surgery to keep your wound clean. Salt water is made by placing a teaspoon of table salt in one cup of warm (NOT HOT) water.
- Do not use mouthwash unless prescribed by your surgeon. Do not rinse with hydrogen peroxide.

WOUND CARE

- No spitting, sucking, or using a straw to avoid disturbing your wound. Avoid chewing food near your surgery site.
- Facial swelling is expected. Swelling will increase the first few days after surgery then gradually decline. Elevate your head with pillows while sleeping to reduce swelling.
- A minor amount of drainage from the surgical site is typical during the first 24 hours.
- Do not use tobacco products while your surgical site is healing. For help with quitting call 1-800-784-8669 to speak with a trained quit coach who can provide help over the phone.

DIET

- Maintain a soft diet after surgery. Advance to firmer foods as you feel able starting 4 days after surgery.
- Eat high-protein, high-calorie foods to aid with healing. Avoid foods that are spicy, hot, or have sharp edges as they may irritate your healing wound.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid carbonated or alcoholic beverages.

MEDICATIONS

- You may have been prescribed a narcotic pain medication after surgery. **Do not drive, drink alcohol, or go to work while taking narcotic pain medications.** Non-narcotic pain relievers such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen may also be used if directed by your surgeon.
- Narcotic pain medications can cause constipation. You may wish to take an over the counter stool softener once or twice daily as needed. Avoid taking narcotic pain medications on an empty stomach.
- Please resume all home medications as directed by your surgeon.

ACTIVITY

- Avoid any strenuous physical activities or contact sports where your jaws may be bumped or injured. Do not lift anything over 15 pounds for 3-5 days after your procedure.

CONTACT YOUR SURGEON

- Call the Oak Ridge office at (865) 482-1319 or the Powell office at (865) 938-6725 with any routine postsurgical questions or concerns.
- If you develop a fever greater than 101.5 °F, have trouble swallowing, difficulty breathing, excessive swelling, uncontrolled bleeding, or have unusual pain develop **call the 24-hour emergency line at (865) 482-1319.**