



## Dental Implants Post-Operative Instructions

**Bed Rest-** If your procedure involved placing a dental implant(s), plan to rest for the remainder of the day with your head elevated about 30 degrees. Advance activity the next day but take it easy; too much activity can increase swelling. If your procedure was for 'Stage II', you may resume normal activities.

**Swelling/Bleeding-** After placement of dental implants, some degree of bruising and/or swelling is to be expected. Maximum swelling occurs within 48 hours following surgery and may last for several days. Apply ice packs to the outside of your cheek(s) every 15-20 minutes for the first 24 hours.

- Blood in your saliva is normal for the first day or two. Place pressure on the area with the gauze provided in your post-operative pack or use a moist tea bag and gently apply pressure for 10-15 minutes. If bleeding continues or is heavy, please call our office.
- If you are having upper implants placed, it is not unusual to have a nosebleed within the first few days following surgery. Should this occur, pack nostrils with the gauze provided, and relax with your head elevated. The bleeding should stop shortly.

**Brushing/Rinsing-** Brush your teeth as usual, keeping your mouth as clean as possible throughout your recovery. Avoid touching the bristles of your toothbrush to the area of surgery. Avoid water picks and electric toothbrushes for two weeks following surgery. The day after surgery, rinse with warm salt-water twice a day. Avoid vigorous rinsing. If a prescription rinse has been ordered, use as directed.

- Leave partials or denture(s) out unless otherwise instructed or until the doctor reinserts it for you.

**Prescriptions-** You may begin taking medication after you have had fluids or something to eat. Take all prescribed medications as directed. The antibiotic must be taken until finished. DO NOT drive a car, operate machinery, or drink alcoholic beverages while taking prescribed pain medications.

**Sutures-** The sutures used will either dissolve or be removed in 7-10 days following surgery, depending on the type of sutures used. It is not unusual for small pieces of sutures to come out prior to this time. If the sutures need to be removed, you will be notified, and an appointment will be made for you. Avoid playing with your implant or caps with your tongue.

**Diet Tips-** Avoid chewing in the area of the implant, as chewing on an implant can damage it. Drink plenty of fluids throughout your recovery to avoid dehydration. It is advisable to eat only soft, non-spicy food for the first few days following surgery. AVOID hot food or liquid that could agitate the already inflamed area. AVOID rice, grits, and foods that are very small that may become lodged in the area. Continue with this diet until you are instructed otherwise. Avoid mobility at the site of the implant(s) until the healing phase is complete (2-6 months).

**Full Denture Patients-** For the first few months following surgery, you will need to be on a soft diet where the implants were placed. Foods such as pudding, applesauce, scrambled eggs, soft flaky fish, pasta and casseroles are recommended. The soft diet can last as long as 2-6 months. Your surgeon will advise you regarding how long you need to continue the soft diet.

**Partial Denture Patients-** Chew foods only in the areas where you have natural teeth remaining. Do not chew hard food in the area of your implants for as long as 2-6 months. Your surgeon will advise you regarding how long you need to continue the soft diet.

**Pain-** Post-operative pain will be the most severe the first day after surgery. It is beneficial to take your pain medication before your numbness wears off. For moderate pain, 600MG of Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) plus 500MG of Tylenol may be taken every 6 hours. For severe pain, take the prescribed pain medication that was provided. DO NOT take the pain medication on an empty stomach as nausea may result. The prescribed medication may make you drowsy. DO NOT drive an automobile, operate machinery, and AVOID alcoholic beverages. Pain or discomfort following surgery should subside more and more each day. If pain persists, it may require attention, and you should contact our office.

**Antibiotics-** If you have been placed on antibiotics, take the medication as directed. Antibiotics are prescribed to prevent infection and must be completed. Discontinue antibiotic use only in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction. PLEASE NOTE: If you are currently taking birth control pills, antibiotics may interfere with their effectiveness. An alternate form of birth control should be used for one complete cycle of birth control pills after the course of antibiotics is completed.

**Nausea and Vomiting-** In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, DO NOT take anything by mouth for at least an hour, including prescribed medications. You should then sip on water, tea, or juice. Sip slowly over a 15-minute period. When the nausea subsides, you can begin taking solid foods and the prescribed medications.

**Activity-** Over-exertion may start or intensify your pain. AVOID excessive work or play. It is not necessary to stay indoors following uncomplicated surgery. However, rest and minimal activity will help to minimize pain, swelling, and bleeding. Normal activity may be resumed the following day as tolerated.

**Cleaning-** Do not rinse or spit vigorously for the first 24 hours following surgery. You can brush your teeth the night of the surgery but rinse gently. The day after surgery, you should begin rinsing four times a day and after eating. Do this gently as to not dislodge the blood clot. To rinse, mix a teaspoon of salt and a cup of warm water. DO NOT use a non-prescription rinse for 24 hours after surgery. Clean the rest of your mouth as usual.

**Special Considerations-** Trismus (stiffness) in the face muscles may cause difficulty upon opening your mouth for a period of days. Moist heat compresses can minimize this condition. You may experience aching from other teeth. This discomfort is caused by referred pain and is a temporary condition. It is not unusual to develop bruising in the area of the extraction. There may be a slight elevation in temperature for 24-48 hours. If the fever persists, please contact our office.

**Other Important Information-** DO NOT smoke or use smokeless tobacco during your healing process. The tars and nicotine may delay healing or cause prolonged bleeding. Bisphosphonate therapy (Fosamax, Boniva, etc.) has been shown to cause osteonecrosis of the jaws which may result in the loss of your implant(s).