

# ***POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS***

## ***Oral Surgery***

*You're going to love the way we treat you!*

**EXERCISE CARE:** Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do **NOT** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects or your fingers. You may brush your teeth gently. **DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 48 hours, since it is very detrimental to healing.

**BLEEDING:** Intermittent bleeding or oozing is normal. It may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the surgical areas and biting down firmly for 30-60 minutes. Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between your teeth rather than exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning fresh packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a tea bag (soaked in hot water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) for 20 or 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

**SWELLING:** Often there is some swelling associated with oral surgery. You can minimize this by using a cold pack or ice bag wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to face or cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the first 12 to 24 hours after surgery. Your swelling may peak 2-3 days after the surgery and will begin to subside 3-4 days after the surgery.

**PAIN:** Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You may have a prescription for pain medication, and if you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you will be able to manage any discomfort better.

**NAUSEA:** Nausea is not an uncommon event after surgery, and it is sometimes caused by stronger pain medicines. Nausea may be reduced by preceding each pill with a small amount of soft food, then taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize the pain medication, but call us if you do not feel better or if repeated vomiting is a problem.

**DIET:** Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., that may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you can progress to solid foods at your own pace.

**SHARP EDGES:** If you feel sharp edges in the surgical areas with your tongue it is probably the bony walls which originally supported the teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the first week or two after the surgery. They are not pieces of tooth and, if necessary, we will remove them. Please call our office if you are concerned.

**MEDICATION:** Any antibiotics (penicillin, erythromycin, etc.) should be taken until gone. Pain medication should only be taken as prescribed to relieve discomfort. Remember, narcotic based pain relievers can cause drowsiness and decrease coordination. You should refrain from using alcohol or other sedative-type drugs while using them.

**BRUSHING:** Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing of all areas, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

**BITE:** It is not uncommon for the bite to feel "different", or that the lower teeth have "shifted" following surgery. This is usually due to stiffness in the muscles resulting in a slight repositioning of the lower jaw or release of pressure on the adjacent teeth and thus a change in the way the teeth meet. This situation generally returns to normal in 1-2 weeks.

**ACTIVITY:** Take it easy the first few days after surgery. It is important to get plenty of rest and avoid strenuous activity especially during the first 48 - 72 hours. You may gradually return back to your normal activities after 3-4 days. If you do not see steady improvement 3-4 after surgery, don't suffer needlessly. Some indicators that you may have post-operative problems which should be looked at are: persistent pain and swelling after the first 3-4 days, persistent jaw stiffness, and repeated bleeding or discharge from the surgical site. Call the office and report symptoms so you can be seen as soon as possible.

**HAVING PROBLEMS?** Contact Dr. Lee during office hours at 740-432-8768. After hours Dr. Lee may be reached on his cell phone at 740-607-3370.

*We appreciate and value your decision to allow Dr. Jeff Lee and his awesome staff to care for you. If you loved the way you were treated today, please tell your family, friends, neighbors and dentist about your positive experience!*

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