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Post-Operative Instructions

Swelling: Swelling is the body's normal response to surgery and the beginning of the healing process. Swelling will vary among individuals and according to different procedures. Swelling will increase over the first 48 hours, and subside over the next 5 to 7 days. Apply cold packs (15 minutes on, 15 minutes off) for the first 36 hours while awake. Keep head elevated for the first 72 hours using pillows under the back and head while sleeping.

Bleeding: Minor bleeding or blood-tinged saliva may occur for the first 24 to 48 hours. Bite on gauze for 1-2 hours following surgery. If heavy bleeding still occurs, replace with new gauze and bite for 1 hour. Do not drink through a straw or suck on candy for 1 week. Do not smoke for 7-10 days following surgery.

Pain: Medication has been prescribed according to your anticipated level of discomfort. Take pain medication before numbness from the local anesthetic is gone. Repeat every 4-6 hours as needed. Take medication with soft, cool, foods to avoid nausea. Do not drive, operate hazardous machinery or drink alcohol while taking pain medication.

Rinsing: You may drink but not rinse mouth for the first 24 hours following surgery. After 24 hours, gently rinse mouth with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon salt in a large glass lukewarm water) 3 to 4 times daily. You may gently brush your teeth the day after surgery, being careful in the areas where surgery was performed. Use the irrigating syringe with warm water after three days for lower teeth extraction.

Diet: A soft diet is best for the first 48 hours. Cool foods such as milk shakes, jell-o, yogurt, pudding, ice cream. And warm foods such as lukewarm soups, pasta, mashed potatoes; scrambled eggs, pancakes or waffles are best. Avoid hot or carbonated beverages for 72 hours. Increase fluid intake to avoid dehydration.

Sutures: If sutures were placed, they will dissolve by themselves unless you are specifically told that non-dissolvable sutures were used.

Note: If you should notice a skin rash, itching, redness, or swelling of the skin, lips, tongue or face; discontinue your medication and contact our office immediately.

Be assured that our interest in your well-being does not end with surgery. If you have any questions or problems, please call us at the office number. Help will always be available.