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## **Post Operative Care Instructions**

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#### **Extractions and Surgical Procedures**

Discomfort is to be expected, the amount is dependent on the type of surgery performed. If you are not allergic, use ibuprofen (Advil and Motrin) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) following the directions as on their labels. Moderate to severe discomfort may require a prescription medication. If swelling leads to any of the following, please call our practice immediately or seek emergency help: you have difficulty with swallowing or breathing; your eye closes; you develop a rash, feel faint, vomit, or acquire a fever. Remember: After our regular business hours, there is an emergency phone number on the office voice mail.

One of the most common problems after an extraction is dry socket. Dry socket is a very unnecessary issue that can be prevented by following the after care instructions. Some bleeding is common and is best controlled by pressure. Bite on a moist piece of gauze. Place the gauze directly over the surgical site and change the gauze every 30 minutes for two hours. Avoid the following for 72 hours: vigorous rinsing, spitting, sucking through a straw, and smoking. Not avoiding these will result in more bleeding and the surgical site will not be able to clot. This can have a negative result on healing.

Avoid physical exertion for the next 48 hours. Ice packs can be applied to the face over the surgical site to reduce swelling and bleeding. Apply the ice packs as follows: 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off. Never apply heat. Soft nutritious foods are ideal for the next 48 to 72 hours (yogurt, cottage cheese, fish, and eggs). Avoid brushing near the surgical area for 24 hours as this may result in disturbed healing. After 24 hours you can return to your normal oral care but be sure to avoid the surgery site. For the surgery site, gently rinse with warm salt water 3 to 4 times per day during the healing process.

#### **Caps / Crowns and Bridges**

After leaving with a temporary crown or bridge, you must refrain from eating sticky, hard, and crunchy foods like tootsie rolls, caramels, and popcorn. Continue to avoid eating these until you get your permanent crown/bridge seated. If you feel the temporary crown/bridge hitting your teeth before the rest of your teeth, call our office so we can get it adjusted. If the temporary crown hits first, this may also cause unnecessary discomfort and swelling. Once again, call our office so we can get it adjusted.

You may continue your normal oral care the next day. If the temporary crown/bridge comes out, you must call the office immediately so that it can be re-cemented back in. If you do not call, and you allow time to go by, the teeth with shift and the permanent crown/bridge will not fit.

#### **Root Canal Therapy – Endodontic Treatment**

Discomfort is normal to experience after the root canal treatment for the next several days. If you experience vomiting, feeling faint, developing a rash, difficulty swallowing or breathing, and/or running a fever within the first 72 hours, please contact our office immediately. For after hours there is an emergency number on the offices voice-mail. These symptoms may be due to a reaction to the medication or an existing infection.

The gum around the tooth that has been treated may also swell and become tender. If swelling occurs on the face and or around the treated area, ice 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off several times a day. To control discomfort, take the pain medication that has been prescribed. When no pain medication has been prescribed, if you are not allergic, you may take Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) by following the directions on the label. If antibiotics have been prescribed, it is imperative to the success of your healing that you take all of your medication as directed. The antibiotics can also reduce or prevent post-operative pain and swelling. Even if you feel better, taking the entire prescription is important to avoid resistance the next time the medication is prescribed.

Following the root canal therapy, the tooth may become weak or brittle and result in the fracture of the tooth. Avoid chewing on the treated tooth. In almost all cases Dr. Griffiths will recommend a crown and core build up for function to prevent tooth fracture. If you have been given a temporary crown, see post operative care instructions for Caps, Crowns and Bridges.

#### **Medications**

It is imperative to the success of your healing that you take all of your medication as directed. Antibiotics: Be sure to take the entire prescription to avoid more resistant bacteria that may grow back faster and stronger. This can result in the antibiotics possibly not having the same affect the next time they are prescribed.