

Implant Surgery Home Care Instructions

Placement of dental implants usually does not create a great deal of pain. General postoperative instructions apply with the exception of rinsing. **Do not rinse with warm salt water.** The doctor has given you a prescription rinse containing chlorhexidine, an antibacterial medicine to assist in the healing and keep the site healthy. Make sure that you get rid of any toothpaste residue prior to rinsing with chlorhexidine and then DO NOT eat or drink for 30 min after rinsing. This will maximize the potency of the chlorhexidine.

Stitches (sutures) have been placed which are the purple or white strings at the area of surgery. Your tongue will want to fiddle with them, but try to ignore them. They dissolve after about 10 days.

Some degree of discomfort and pain arises as the numbness subsides. Pain will be most severe within the first 6-8 hours after surgery. Take any prescribed medication at the first sign of pain or discomfort. Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking prescription medication. As an alternative you may use non-prescription pain relievers such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Advil (ibuprofen). Take any prescribed medication as directed along with your regular medications, i.e. blood pressure, etc. If antibiotics were prescribed, take them to completion. Birth control pills can be rendered ineffective by antibiotics, so use appropriate precautions.

Do not disturb the area of surgery. Allowing the tissues to rest undisturbed assists the healing process. Avoid vigorous chewing, excessive spitting, or aggressive rinsing. If you routinely use a Water Pik, avoid doing so during the healing phase. Initial healing may be delayed, active bleeding restarted or infection introduced.

Expect minor bleeding or oozing. If bleeding persists, continue pressure on a fresh gauze sponge for an additional 30 minutes to an hour. Biting on a moist teabag wrapped in gauze may help control persistent oozing from the surgical site. Tea contains tannic acid, which promotes blood clotting. Firm pressure for 15-30 minutes usually controls the problem. If you check too frequently (every few minutes), you will continually disrupt the clot. Wait the full 15 minutes before checking it. In bleeding persists for more than 4 hours contact our office.

Limit physical activity during the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Overexertion may lead to postoperative bleeding and discomfort. When you lie down keep your head elevated on a pillow. You may wish to place a towel on your pillowcase to avoid staining from any blood-tainted saliva.

Swelling related to surgery may occur following certain types of procedures. An ice pack should be placed on the side of your face over the area of surgery for 20min, then removed for 20 min, etc. continually. Anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen will decrease swelling.

Drink lots of fluids. Clear beverages, Ginger-Ale, Seven-Up, water, teas, broth, soups or juices are all suitable. Avoid hot liquids until the numbness has worn off and the bleeding has stopped.

Eat soft cold foods. A nutritious diet is most important to your comfort and temperament. Remember that eating can prevent nausea sometimes associated with medications. **Do not eat any popcorn, poppy seeds, sesame seeds or seeded fruits. They can get stuck and cause infection!**

Try to avoid smoking completely, as it delays healing and the regeneration of bone tissue. The probability of success (osteointegration of the implant) drops almost 20% with nicotine use. (from 95% to 75%) Chewing tobacco, Nicoret gum and nicotine patches have the same effect.

Bruises may appear on the skin of the face and fade usually with a few days.

For any emergencies, difficulties or questions contact us using the information below.

