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**PERIODONTAL SURGERY
POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

Rest during the early healing period will permit a more comfortable postoperative course. Try to scale down your normal routine after surgery if you have had more than one area of your mouth operated.

COMFORT AND MEDICATIONS

Comfort will be maintained by taking your pain medication(s) () as prescribed, especially the first three days. Even though a narcotic analgesic may have been prescribed, Dr. Ross recommends the use of ALEVE (naproxen) if you are able to take it (1st day: 1 tablet ASAP, 2nd tablet 3 hours later; 3rd tablet 6 hours after 1st; 2nd and 3rd day follow directions on bottle).

Take the first dose of pain medication as soon as you arrive home after surgery, but after you have had a chance to eat solid food. To avoid nausea from the pain medication do not eat foods which are difficult to digest, such as dairy products or fatty foods. Taking pain medication with solid food will diminish the medication's tendency to upset your stomach. DO NOT WAIT for discomfort to become severe before taking the pain medication since the pain medication will take some time to become effective. Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication. DO NOT TAKE pain medication on an empty stomach--nausea can result.

An antibiotic () may have been prescribed. Take it as directed on the label until all tablets or capsules are taken.

DIET

It is important to have a nutritious diet, particularly during the initial healing period. Avoid eating on the treated side, if possible, so as not to disrupt the dressing or traumatize the wound.

You may eat regular foods. If you cannot chew normally, stay on a soft and/or liquid diet, but be sure it contains enough calories, vitamins, and protein to keep you feeling and healing well. If you can only manage with liquids, supplement your diet with liquid diet supplements (such as Nutriment, Sustacal, Metrecal, etc) from your druggist. If your stomach gets upset from the pain medication, stay on a bland diet (jello, bouillon, unspiced carbohydrates, clear fluids) and avoid dairy products and fats until your stomach has settled.

DRESSING (PINK PACKING)

The dressing covering the treated area is helpful in maintaining comfort. It should be brushed gently to keep it clean. If small pieces of the dressing are lost do not become concerned unless the operated area becomes uncomfortable, or you were told specifically to call the office if the dressing was lost. The dressing will be removed in one to two weeks. It may be replaced for the second week after surgery, depending on the rate of healing and your comfort level.

If you have a removable partial and it has been inserted over the dressing, try to leave the partial in for at least a few hours after surgery. You can take the partial out after a few hours if you feel more comfortable without it, but usually it will fit better the first week if it can be left in place over the dressing during the first postoperative day. When you do remove your partial, do so carefully so the dressing does not come out with the partial. Lubricate the area of the partial that touches the dressing with Vaseline before reinserting it. The Vaseline will prevent the partial from sticking to the dressing. If you feel more comfortable without your partial, you can leave it out until wound healing progresses to the stage that you are comfortable with the partial. This may take 1-2 weeks.

ORAL HYGIENE

Your usual plaque control procedures should be continued in the non-treated areas of your mouth. Your mouth will feel better and your breath will be better if you can clean well during the first week despite some soreness. You may be prescribed an antibacterial mouth rinse (Peridex or Periogard) to assist in plaque control after surgery. Do not forget to gently brush the dressing and/or treated teeth with Q-tip dipped in mouth rinse. The prescription antibacterial rinse is most effective if used after meals and before bed. If you use the medicated mouth rinse as a rinse, it may stain your other teeth. Use of an oral irrigator (Water Pik) should be avoided in the surgical area for six to eight weeks.

SWELLING and DISCOLORATION

Apply ice or a cold pack to the outside of your face, over the treated area fifteen minutes on and fifteen minutes off for the first 24 hours (especially the first 5-8 hours after surgery). A "Baggie" filled with ice and wrapped in a towel works nicely in addition to use of the cold pack we provide. Swelling may not begin until the 2nd day and usually peaks at 72 hours. Gentle cold water rinses every one-half hour in the first 5 to 8 hours will keep your mouth clear and provide cold to the operated area.

BLEEDING

Some blood will stain your saliva. This minor "oozing" is normal. Oozing can be diminished by gently rinsing with cold water for a few minutes every one-half hour during the first hours after surgery. Consider sleeping with your head elevated off the side you had surgery. Place old pillowcase on pillow due to possible oozing of blood.

If continuous bleeding occurs, discontinue rinsing, avoid exertion, and do the following: thoroughly rinse all blood and blood clots from your mouth. Moisten a tea bag (preferable), gauze pad, or Kleenex tissue. Place one of these moistened bags or pads over the dressing, if present, on the tongue side of the bleeding area, and a second one on the cheek side in the area of bleeding. Push with firm pressure against the dressing or the surgical site with your thumb and forefinger. Apply CONTINUOUS, FIRM pressure to both sides of the dressing for twenty minutes, WITHOUT removing for inspection.

If bleeding persists, after 20 minutes of continuous pressure, call the office or call Dr. Ross' cell phone number (216) 571-3082.

FEVER

A slight fever or chills may occur. They are of no consequence unless they persist more than 48 hours. A persistent elevated temperature should be reported to the office.

FUTURE APPOINTMENTS

You will be given an appointment to remove the dressing, if one is placed, and stitches (sutures) 1-2 weeks after surgery. Appointments should be kept as scheduled. Delay in removing any dressing or sutures will delay healing. If you normally take an antibiotic premedication before dental appointments please be sure to take it at your next appointment.