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AFTER SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

You have just been through a minor surgical procedure. You should be sure to follow these instructions, in order to speed up the healing process. Maintain rest for the balance of the day; avoid strenuous activity.

PAIN

Take Ibuprofen; Motrin, Advil, or your prescription as directed. If impacted teeth were removed take medication before the numbness wears off. To avoid irritation to the stomach be sure to eat before taking the pain medication. Stop the medication if you develop hives or a rash. Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking medications. Do not drive while taking any medications stronger than Ibuprofen or Advil.

BLEEDING

Remove gauze when you get home. Some bleeding is expected following tooth extractions. If bleeding persists when you get home, place gauze over the bleeding area. Apply light pressure by closing teeth together for 20 minutes. Light bleeding may persist for 24-48 hours. Remain quiet and keep head elevated for the next two nights by sleeping on two pillows or a recliner. If stitches were placed it is to control bleeding and to help healing. They will dissolve over the next week. The grayish color of the blood clot is normal. Do not lift or pull your lip to look at the surgery site. This can pull out the sutures or cause bleeding.

SWELLING

Many patients experience swelling in the area or the skin may look bruised. Do not be alarmed regarding swelling or discoloration of the face that occurs following extractions, as it may be perfectly normal and does not indicate infection. Swelling will generally reach its peak in 2-3 days, and could last as long as a week to 10 days. Ice packs are helpful in the first 48 hours. Following multiple extractions or difficult extractions, apply ice pack to the jaw bone 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. Repeat until bedtime. After 48 hours, you may apply moist heat (run washcloth under warm-hot water and wring out). Be sure to exercise your jaw from side to side as the warm, moist heat is applied. Swelling usually subsides in 3-6 days.

DIET

The first 24 hours following surgery you should not have anything very hot to eat or drink - warm or cold is fine. If only a few teeth were extracted or minor surgery was done in the mouth, follow your regular diet as tolerated. Following multiple extractions or impacted teeth it is important to drink lots of fluids and eat soft foods. Good nutrition is important for healing.

MOUTH WASH

To aid in healing after the first 24 hours following extractions, warm salt water should be used. Do not use commercial mouthwashes for several days. Resume brushing after the first 24 hours. Dissolve a teaspoon of table salt in a glass of warm water. The mouth should be rinsed gently after eating and bedtime for the next week. Do not rinse too vigorously.

DRY SOCKETS

Dry sockets may occur 4-10 days after the surgery. A throbbing or pounding sensation may be present that is not relieved by pain medications. Special medicated packing may be necessary.

NOTE

Tightness of the muscles may cause difficulty in opening the mouth. You may have a slight earache and feel that you have a sore throat the day of the surgery. If the corners of the mouth are stretched, they may dry out and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with a cream ointment or Vaseline. You may have a slight elevation in temperature for 24-48 hours. No swimming or vigorous exercise for several days following the surgery. Avoid sucking motions, spitting, and smoking for several days after an extraction, it may dislodge the healing blood clot and cause a dry socket. Bony edges may work their way through your gums during healing. These are not tooth roots; they are bony pieces or fragments. If they do not work their way out or become an annoyance, return to our office for a simple removal.

Before Surgery Information

If you are going to have a general anesthetic (go to sleep) you **MUST NOT** eat or drink for 8 hours prior to surgery. Not even water. A responsible adult must accompany the patient to the office, remain in the office during the procedure, and drive the patient home.

Surgical removal of teeth may result in swelling, discoloration, discomfort, and limitation of jaw motion. This is especially true of impacted teeth. The amount of swelling is related to the extent of surgery and will reach its peak after 36 hours. Limitation of jaw motion will subside as the swelling decreases. The swelling usually will last for about 5-10 days. Numbness of the lower lip, chin, or tongue can occur after removal of impacted teeth. This nerve is associated with feeling only. The length of time for nerve tissue to heal is very slow and the numbness usually is temporary. However, on rare circumstances it may be permanent.

When doing surgery in the mouth, injury and fracture to the teeth, fillings, or jaws may occur in some instances. Roots of upper back teeth are in or near the sinus floor. If any opening occurs between the tooth socket and the sinus following extraction, further surgery may be needed. There are instances when a root tip may knowingly be left in place. Following the use of drugs given in the vein, there is a possibility of pain, swelling, and bruising in the area. This can be relieved with applications of warm compresses on the site.

With the use of any medications allergies may occur. **CAUTION** - anesthetic drugs and gases may remain in the body for up to 24 hours or longer. Patients receiving medications or drugs of this kind should **NOT** drive or operate machinery for 24 hours, also strong medications prescribed after surgery that contain narcotics will affect one's ability to drive or operate machinery. You will need someone to stay with you and be prepared to stay home with you the day of surgery.

We welcome you to the office and look forward to serving you. If you have any questions, please give us a call or ask them before the surgery.