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WISDOM TEETH POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

At the Center for Advanced Dentistry, we know that having your impacted third molars, better known as “wisdom teeth”, removed is a serious surgical procedure!

Dr. Randall Davis has determined that conscientious post-operative care is very important. If you carefully follow the doctor’s instructions as listed below, you can avoid unnecessary pain and complications such as swelling & infection.

Immediately following your surgery:

> **Bite on the gauze pad placed over the surgical site for an hour.**

After this time, the gauze pad should be removed and discarded and replaced by another gauze pad. Refer to the section on **BLEEDING** for specific details.

> **Avoid vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the wound area following surgery.** If you rinse your mouth vigorously or touch the area, you may cause bleeding due to the blood clot that has recently formed being dislodged.

> **To minimize any swelling, place ice packs on the areas of your face where surgery was performed.** Refer to the section on **SWELLING** for further explanation.

> Take your prescribed pain medication as soon as you can so it is digested before the local anesthetic has worn off. Eat something you don't have to chew very much to coat your stomach. Foods such as pudding, milkshake, or better yet, a protein shake will help minimize nausea from your pain medication. Refer to the section on **PAIN** for specific details.

> Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. If you are active, your heart will be beating harder and you can expect excessive bleeding and throbbing from the wound..

NO SMOKING UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!!

BLEEDING

> A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following your surgery. On the surface of your skin, where the surface is dry, bleeding clots in 10 minutes. Inside your mouth, where it is wet, it takes 6-8 hours for the clot to gel or set-up and thus it takes longer for any bleeding to subside. Slight bleeding or oozing which causes redness in your saliva is very common. For this reason, **a gauze pad will always appear red when it is removed.** When your mouth ‘waters’, saliva washes over the blood clots and dyes the gauze red even after bleeding from the sockets has actually stopped.

> Excessive bleeding may be controlled by **GENTLY** rinsing or wiping any old clots from your mouth , then placing a gauze pad over the area and **biting firmly for sixty minutes**.

Repeat as necessary.

> If bleeding continues, bite a moist tea bag for 30 minutes. This might sound unusual, but the tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting your blood vessels. This can be repeated several times.

> To minimize further bleeding, sit upright, do not become excited, **maintain constant pressure on the gauze (no talking or chewing) and avoid exercise**.

PAIN

> Some discomfort is normal after oral surgery. You should begin taking pain medication prior to the local anesthetic wearing off. You may begin taking pain medication when you get home along with some food. For moderate pain, 1 or 2 tablets of Tylenol or Extra strength Tylenol may be taken every 4 hours, not to exceed 3000 mg a day. Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) may be alternated with tylenol. Ibuprofen bought over the counter comes in 200mg tablets: 2-3 tablets mayb taken 4 times daily, not to exceed 3200 mg daily for an adult. Alternating between ibuprofen and tylenol every 3-4 hours is ideal for managing most types of pain after oral surgery. Consult our practice for individuals under 18 years. Do not take any of the above medications if you are allergic to them or have been instructed by your doctor not to take them.

If you have been prescribed a narcotic pain medication(e.g., Tylenol #3, Norco, Vicodin, Ultram) please use as directed. You may alternate the narcotic with ibuprofen or (motrin) if instructed to do so. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages or other sedative medications while on narcotic pain medication.

SWELLING

> The amount of swelling you can normally expect is usually proportional to the surgery involved. There is usually a fair amount of cheek retraction involved with the removal of your impacted wisdom teeth. Therefore, you should expect swelling of your cheek after your surgery.

> The **swelling will not become apparent until the day following your surgery and will not reach its maximum until 2-3 days post-operatively**.

> Swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Sealed plastic bags filled with ice, ice packs, or a bag of frozen peas or corn wrapped in a washcloth should be applied to the side of the face where surgery was performed.

> You should **apply ice packs repeatedly, 20 minutes on / 20 minutes off for the afternoon and evening immediately following your extraction(s)**. After 24 hours, ice has no beneficial effect.

- > After 36 hrs has passed following the surgery, the application of moist heat to the side of the face may help in reducing the size of any swelling that has formed.
- > If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. Soft, puffy swelling that you can indent with your finger after oral surgery is very normal.
- > However, Bright red, rock hard, hot swelling that does not indent with finger pressure and which is getting bigger by the hour would suggest infection. This situation would usually develop around day 3-4 after surgery when you would expect swelling to be subsiding, not increasing! If this should occur, please call dr randy

DIET:

- > **Drink plenty of fluids**, Try to drink 5-6 ounce glasses the first day.
- > Drink from a glass or cup and **dont use a straw**. The sucking motion will suck out the healing blood clot and start bleeding again.
- > **Avoid hot liquids or food** while you are numb so you don't burn yourself!
- > **Soft food and liquids can be eaten on the day of surgery** . The act of chewing does not damage anything but you should avoid chewing sharp or hard objects at the surgical site for several days.
- > **Return to a normal diet as soon as possible** unless otherwise directed. YOu will find eating multiple small meals is easier than three regular meals for the first few days.
- > You will feel better, have more strength , less discomfort and heal faster if you continue to eat.
- > **If you suddenly sit up or stand from a lying position, you may become dizzy**. Therefore, immediately following surgery, if you are lying down, make sure you sit for one minute before standing,

ORAL HYGIENE

- > **Good oral hygiene is essential to proper healing of any oral surgery site**.
- > **You can brush your teeth the night of surgery but rinse very gently**. Vigorous rinsing should be avoided until the day following the surgery.
- > **The day after surgery you should begin rinsing at least 5-6 times a day, especially after eating**. Salt water (a cup of warm water mixed with a teaspoon of salt) is ideal but plain water is also ok.

ACTIVITY

- > You should **keep physical activities to a minimum for 6-12 hours following surgery**.
- > If you are considering exercise, throbbing or bleeding may occur, If this occurs, you should discontinue exercising.
- > Keep in mind that you are probably not taking normal nourishment. This may weaken you and further limit your ability to exercise.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

What is a dry socket?

- > A dry socket is a health problem. When the blood clot gets dislodged prematurely from the tooth socket or does not expand to fill the socket the bone is left exposed. Exposed bone means raw nerve endings. They will cause pain until they are covered over by a healing blood clot.
- > A dry socket is different from an infection. Therefore, antibiotics alone may not help a dry socket.

> Symptoms of pain at the surgical site and even pain referred to the ear may occur 3-4 days following surgery without increased swelling or increased temperature are classic

What if I feel a rough edge with my tongue several days or weeks after surgery?

> Occasionally, patients may feel hard projections in the mouth with their tongue in the area of surgery. They are not roots or parts of the tooth, They are the bony walls which supported the tooth in the jawbone, (the walls of the tooth socket,) we call this a spicule

What if my lower lip, chin or tongue feels numb several days after surgery?

> If numbness of the lip, chin, or tongue occurs there is no cause for alarm. As stated before surgery. This is usually temporarily in nature.

> Just like stretching on the cheek causes swelling, stretching on the nerves within or next to the jaw causes swelling. A swollen nerve stops working for a while so the area it innervates feels numb

>The vast majority of patients with such numbness find it to resolve spontaneously slowly after surgery. It could take weeks to months to resolve but in rare cases it could linger indefinitely since your lip or tongue is numb, be careful not to bite or burn it after surgery.

If there is an urgent matter, such as rapidly growing swelling or severe reaction to the prescribed medication, you can contact Dr Randall Davis on his cell phone (908)415-8479