

## **PATIENT POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING PERIODONTAL AND DENTAL IMPLANT SURGERY**

To help you achieve the best possible results, comfort, and peace of mind, please read these instructions before your treatment. Refer to them immediately after treatment and throughout your healing phases.

### **IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING YOUR SURGERY AND UNTIL THE NEXT MORNING**

Unless advised otherwise, go home and rest—even if you feel fine. The more you move around the slower you might heal. Lie down with your head slightly elevated or sit in a reclining position. Especially during the first few hours following surgery, please keep talking to a minimum, as your lips and cheeks act as natural “bandages” during initial healing.

### **USE COMMON SENSE**

You just had a surgical procedure and your body needs time to heal. Do not over-exert yourself through exercise or working too hard prematurely. Minimize talking for a few days. Elevate your head when you sleep. If you are eating foods that cause discomfort or bleeding, simply eat something else. If you are doing an activity that causes discomfort or bleeding, stop that activity. Do not fly immediately after surgery and at least five days. Plan your work trips and vacations accordingly.

### **PAIN**

When the anesthetic wears off (1-4 hours), you may experience mild-moderate discomfort/pain. Most patients describe this feeling as “annoying” and not extremely painful. Follow these instructions to help minimize discomfort. It is quite normal if you experience more discomfort approximately 4-8 days after surgery. Don’t worry! Discomfort typically diminishes thereafter.

### **BLEEDING**

For the next few days you will probably notice some sporadic oozing and slight bleeding. This is quite normal and should diminish within 72-96 hours (3-4 days). To help reduce the chances of adverse bleeding, avoid anything that causes pressure in the mouth like the use of straws, smoking, or “holding-in” a sneeze. Also, avoid the use of blood thinning medications like aspirin unless otherwise directed by your medical physician.

For patients who had tissue transplanted from the roof of the mouth (palate): The roof of the mouth tends to ooze more than other areas. This is very normal. Follow special instructions if given to you and wear the protective guard for at least 72 hours. If bleeding persists to the extent that it bothers you, moisten a tea bag (not herbal tea) and apply firm yet gentle pressure against the bleeding site of the palate for fifteen minutes. Repeat, if needed, a second time.

*IF EXCESS BLEEDING CONTINUES PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE OR DR. TEMLOCK*

### **SWELLING AND BRUISING PREVENTION**

Slight swelling around the surgical site is expected and may be present following surgery. Usually, *swelling increases slowly for several days before gradually dissipating. The swelling may persist for several days and usually peaks approximately 4-6 days after surgery.* Follow these important steps in order to prevent or minimize swelling and bruising:

1. Rest immediately after surgery
2. Take anti-inflammatory medications as prescribed
3. Use ice therapy for the first several hours following surgery

### **ICE AND MOIST HEAT THERAPY**

If you have been instructed to do so, use ice therapy during at least the first 3-5 hours after surgery. Place an ice bag on your face over the surgical area (10-15 minutes “on” then 10-15 minutes “off”). *Be gentle and do not apply pressure to your face. Avoid pushing up or pulling down on your skin with the ice pack.* Ice therapy can usually continue during the first 24-hour period following your surgery. After that, discontinue ice therapy unless directed otherwise. Helpful hint: Use moldable soft ice packs, zip-lock bags with chipped ice or small plastic bags of frozen peas or corn. If you use frozen food, please discard after use. Do not put the cold plastic directly on your skin: wrap the cold pack in a slightly dampened towel.

*Do not use moist heat during the first 48 hours following surgery.* After that time, if some bruising is present, consider applying moist heat on your face over the surgical area (hot water bottle, compress, etc.). It will increase circulation and decrease swelling/bruising. Wrap the heat pack in a slightly dampened towel or use a microwave-type moist heating pad. Be careful not to burn your skin.

### **MEDICATIONS**

**Take all your medications as prescribed:** Simply read the instructions on each prescription bottle for information regarding frequency and duration of each medication. Compliance with prescriptions is one of the most important elements to your healing. Before taking any medication, carefully read your prescription labels and medication fact sheets supplied by the pharmacist. Ask questions about interactions with other medications you may be taking. If you develop any allergic or other adverse reactions to the medication, stop taking the drug and call our office or the pharmacy. If severe a severe reaction occurs, go to a local hospital emergency room. Narcotic pain medications and sedative drugs impair motor skills and sensory awareness. Do not drive motor vehicles or operate potentially dangerous equipment while under the influence of these drugs.

## **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

It is recommended that you refrain from alcohol intake for 3-5 days following surgery. Alcohol can delay wound healing and/or cause increased bleeding. Do not drink alcohol while under the influence of narcotic pain relievers.

## **SMOKING**

Do not smoke following your procedure. Any type or amount of smoking significantly retards surgical healing and makes you more susceptible to adverse complications including but not limited to infections, graft/implant failure, poor surgical outcomes, and prolonged sensitivity/pain.

## **NOURISHMENT**

High quality nutrients are very important for healing tissue. Below are some helpful hints:

- Avoid the use of straws.
- Try to avoid eating and chewing near the surgical site. Try to use the opposite side of the mouth if possible.
- Drink lots of water (minimally 2 quarts per day). Increased fluid consumption will counter drug-causing constipation.
- Start with cold to warm, soft foods. Yogurt, cottage cheese, and ice cream are easy to consume initially. Avoid extremely hot foods and liquids for several days. Remember that excessive heat can increase bleeding and pain inside the mouth.
- If chewing is uncomfortable, pre-cut your food into smaller pieces or use a food processor.
- Avoid foods with small seeds or nuts.
- As you begin to eat more solid foods, start slowly and gradually. For example, put vegetables in low sodium vegetable/chicken broth with some lean meat, pasta, and cook. To make chewing easier, lightly steam firm vegetables. If you want to eat bread, choose soft varieties initially. Plain baked potatoes and pasta are excellent sources of carbohydrate energy. Rice tends to stick between your teeth.
- If you want to supplement your diet for a few days following surgery, consider nutritionally complete commercially available liquid supplements. Do not substitute power bars/high energy bars for nutritious natural food.

## **EXERCISE**

*If you had a soft tissue graft, do not exercise at all until Dr. Temlock has approved these activities. Otherwise, use common sense and allow your body to heal for 5-7 days before returning to highly impactful, cardio-vascular activities.* Heavy cardio-vascular activities increase blood pressure on immature, healing wounds. As such, low-impact activities are recommended when you start exercising again. Keep your head above your heart (yoga poses, weight lifting, etc). Avoid swimming, snorkeling, and scuba diving until you are advised to do so. If you do exercise in water, keep your mouth above water level.

*STOP EXERCISING IMMEDIATELY IF YOU BEGIN TO BLEED, EXPERIENCE DIZZINESS, OR FEEL FAINT!*

## **BRUSHING AND FLOSSING**

In all areas of your mouth that were not treated at this time, please continue with your daily self-care procedures as previously discussed. It is generally a good idea to resume hygiene on these areas the day after the procedure. For the surgically treated areas, please follow the customized instructions you received at your surgical appointment. Dr. Temlock will develop and discuss an individualized hygiene program based on your surgery and healing at every post-operative visit.

## **SUTURES (STITCHES)**

Please don't pull, push, or play with the sutures. Do not try and cut the stitches or take them out by yourself. If they bother you, please call our office for instructions. Sutures will tend to loosen and droop after several days as swelling subsides.

## **VISUALIZING THE SURGICAL SITE**

*Do not try and visualize the surgical site. Do not show the surgical site to others.* If you are curious how the surgical site looks, Dr. Temlock will show you at your next visit. Pulling on the cheeks, lips, gum tissues, and/or the tongue can traumatize the surgical site or stretch the stitches leading to surgical failure and increased pain/discomfort.

## **TOOTH SENSITIVITY AND MOBILITY**

A common side effect of oral surgery is thermal sensitivity to foods, liquids, and even the air your breath. This is completely normal and will dissipate slowly over time as the teeth begin to heal. This side effect can last several weeks. It is extremely unlikely to become permanent so be patient with this process. Similarly, teeth in the surgical area can experience temporary hyper-mobility after surgery. Dr. Temlock can answer any questions about these symptoms at any post-operative visit.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE WHERE YOUR PROCEDURE WAS COMPLETED OR LEAVE A MESSAGE FOR DR. TEMLOCK AT (415) 787-3151. HE WILL RETURN YOUR MESSAGE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THIS NUMBER DOES NOT ACCEPT TEXT MESSAGES.**

**IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION AND DR. TEMLOCK IS UNAVAILABLE, GO DIRECTLY TO YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY ROOM AND SEEK IMMEDIATE CARE**