

# Post-Surgery Instructions

## *General Instructions*

1. Unless otherwise directed, do not rinse the mouth the day of surgery.
2. Ice packs should be used continuously to minimize swelling for the first twenty four hours. Moist heat may be used after twenty four hours for comfort.
3. Avoid hot liquids, carbonated and alcoholic beverages for twenty four hours.
4. Do not smoke or use a straw.
5. Avoid spitting the day of surgery.
6. It is important to keep your mouth very clean following surgery. A soft toothbrush, cotton swabs, or gentle rinsing with salty water (1/2 teaspoon salt in a full glass of warm tap water) is helpful before going to bed the night of surgery.
7. Beginning the next day, gently rinse the mouth using a full glass of warm water in which ½ teaspoon of salt has been dissolved –three time a day. If you cannot get a supply of salt, use the warm water anyway. You may brush your teeth gently and use a commercial mouthwash. Do not add salt to the warm water if you have high blood pressure or heart disease.
8. Eat soft foods (warm or cold) and maintain adequate daily fluid consumption. (Liquid food supplements, juices, malts, soup, etc.)
9. Small stiches have been placed in the gums. These are dissolving sutures which will disappear in 3 - 7 days.

## *IN CASE OF BLEEDING*

1. After your teeth were removed, a gauze compress was placed on the wound and you were asked to keep your jaws closed tightly for 30 - 45 minutes. This was to help stop the bleeding and keep saliva away from the open socket. This compress may then be discarded.

2. Should slight bleeding continue, it is a good plan to put a fresh, clean gauze compress on the bleeding place in the same manner, this may be repeated as needed every 30 – 45 minutes.
3. If the bleeding continues in spite of the above, make a small amount of strong tea, boiling it for 5 minutes, then soak a small gauze compress in the tea, and place firmly on the tooth socket which is bleeding. Close the jaws tightly and hold this way for 30 minutes. Repeat if necessary.
4. It also helps to stop the bleeding if you lie down, with the head raised on pillows. Apply an ice bag or cold compress to the cheek on that side. Do not become alarm or excited. Slight oozing may continue for 1-2 days. Almost all bleeding will be controlled by these measures. Remember that the bleeding may appear to be more than it actually is because of dilution in the saliva.

## *EXPLANATIONS OF SYMPTOMS THAT MAY OCCUR*

1. Swelling and an elevated temperature of some extent follows nearly every extraction. This is nature's way of beginning the healing process. It does not mean infection is present. After the removal of impacted teeth or trimming of the bone, swelling is often quite severe. It is often most marked on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> day and begins to disappear on the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> day.
2. Stiffness of the jaws is also nature's way of resting the part which needs to be repaired, and usually relaxes about the 4<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> day.
3. Black and blue marks on the face are caused by bleeding, internally, into the cheeks or chin. This appears first as swelling, but after the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> day it may discolor the face yellow, black or blue. It will gradually disappear in a week or ten days. A wet towel may be applied for ten minutes, three times a day. This will be comforting but will not speed up the fading process.
4. Slight numbness of the lip or tongue may occur as was previously explained. The doctor who operated is entitled to be consulted first in case of trouble. He will appreciate the courtesy. Do not hesitate to call in an emergency.
5. The prescription for relief of post-operative discomfort should be taken as directed. Alcohol or other medications may increase the sedative effects of the medicine.