

Post-op Care for Dental Implants

Immediate Postoperative Care

Care should be taken in the immediate postoperative period to minimize contact with the implant. Aside from normal hygiene, it is best to completely leave the implant alone for the first 2 weeks after placement. You may want to limit foods to softer items and chew in an area away from the implant during the 10 to 12 week integration stage.

Bleeding

Minimal bleeding is expected after implant surgery. Bleeding after surgery may continue for several hours. The best way to stop bleeding is to fold 2 pieces of **damp** gauze over the extraction site and gently bite for 30-60 minutes making sure pressure is being applied to the extraction site. Rest quietly with your head elevated. If bleeding continues, use gauze for an additional 30 minutes. Bleeding should always be evaluated by looking directly at the surgical site. Pink or blood-tinged saliva may be seen for 2-3 days following the surgery and does not indicate a problem. Suture material may last 2 to 3 days and should be left alone. You will be asked to return to the office for a 2 week follow-up appointment. Any sutures remaining at that time may be removed at the surgeon's discretion. Do not pull or cut the sutures yourself.

Swelling

Swelling is the body's normal reaction to surgery and healing. The swelling will not become apparent until 24 hours after surgery and will not reach its peak for 2-3 days. After this time, the swelling should decrease but may persist for 7-10 days. Swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Apply the ice packs to the outside of the face 20 minutes on and then 20 minutes off while awake for the first 24 hours. After 48 hours, begin use of a warm, moist compress to the cheek.

Medication / Pain

Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. If you do not have an allergy to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil) we recommend taking this prior to the local anesthetic wearing off. More severe pain may require a narcotic pain medication. Narcotic pain medication will make you drowsy, do not drive or operate mechanical machinery while taking the prescription. Alternate Ibuprofen (2 tablets / 200mg each) and the narcotic medication every two hours if needed. Once you feel like you can stop the narcotic, use Ibuprofen or Tylenol. You may also be prescribed an antibacterial mouth rinse which should be used twice daily in the first two weeks following implant surgery. All medications should not exceed the recommended dosage.

***NOTE: If you are taking PLAVIX or COUMADIN, do NOT take Ibuprofen or Aspirin products.**

Diet

After General anesthetic or I.V. sedation, start with liquids. While numb, patients should avoid hot liquids or foods. Patients may have applesauce, pudding, or jello. Once numbness wears off patients can progress to solid foods, chewing away from the surgical sites.

Oral Hygiene

The best way to prevent infection and ensure healing is to keep your mouth clean. Clean your mouth thoroughly after each meal beginning the day after surgery. Use a soft bristle toothbrush and toothpaste after meals and at bedtime. Should bleeding resume after brushing, repeat the use of gauze as described above. Do not rinse your mouth the day of surgery.

Activity

For the first 48 hours you should rest and relax with no physical activity. After 48 hours, you may resume activity as tolerated.

Healing

Bad breath is common and will disappear as healing occurs. Two to three days following surgery, white, possible hard tissue may be seen in the surgical site. This signifies normal, healing tissue. It's not unusual to see the silver healing cap appear through gum tissue following procedure.

Antibiotics

If an antibiotic is prescribed, take the tablets or liquid as directed. Take the entire prescription until gone. Antibiotics can be given to help prevent infection. Make sure to call the office if a rash or other unfavorable reaction occurs.

Foods to Drink and Eat While Numb AVOID carbonated beverages and hot liquids for 48 hours

Drink:

Water
Juice
Ice Chips
Popsicles

Eat:

Applesauce
Jell-O
Pudding
Yogurt
Milkshake (no straw)

Add Soft Foods When Numbness is Gone

Mashed Potatoes
Pasta
Eggs
Pancakes
Creamed Cereals
Soups (be careful-not too hot)

Increase Diet as Tolerated

Other Considerations

Your surgeon will notify you and your dentist when your implant is ready for restoration; typically 10 to 12 weeks following implant placement.