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## Post-operative Surgical Instructions

**Pain:** Moderate to severe discomfort is to be expected after oral surgery. The first pain medication should be taken before the local anesthesia wears off. Normally the worst pain occurs the second day after surgery. Normally pain will gradually diminish over 5 to 7 days.

**Swelling:** Swelling is normal after surgery. Applying an ice pack (bag of frozen peas) after surgery will help minimize swelling. Apply the ice pack for about 10 minutes twice an hour for the first 24 hours. It is normal for the swelling to persist for 5 to 7 days. Warm moist heat after the first 48 hours may help reduce pain and swelling.

**Bleeding:** Some bleeding or oozing can be expected for the first 24 hours after surgery. For the first hour after surgery, moderate pressure is applied to the surgical site by biting on the gauze provided. Do not change the gauze more than every 30 minutes. Do not eat or sleep with the gauze in your mouth. DO NOT smoke for at least 5 days after surgery. Do not suck on straws. Do not spit. Do not rinse your mouth vigorously for the first 24 hours after surgery. Mild rinsing is acceptable. When lying down elevate your head with two pillows and cover the pillows with a towel. If bleeding persists a tea bag may be wrapped in gauze and moderate biting pressure applied. This along with the ice packs should limit bleeding.

**Nausea:** Most often nausea is caused by the pain medication especially when taken on an empty stomach. If nausea occurs discontinue taking the pain medication, remain at rest in a dark quiet room and take small sips of clear fluids. For discomfort over the counter Ibuprofen 600mg (200mg tablets x3) taken every 6 hours has been shown to be very effective at reducing pain from surgery. It also helps reduce swelling. Do not take this medication while nauseated as it may upset your stomach. If nausea persists for more than 6 hours contact me.

**Temperature:** Any time surgery is performed there can be an elevation in body temperature. Contact me if your temperature is greater than 101 F.

**Diet:** Initially, only liquids (not through a straw) should be taken. Fluid intake and adequate diet are important for healing, prevent nausea and elevated body temperature. I recommend a nutritional liquid diet such as Ensure Plus. After the local anesthesia has worn off a soft diet may be taken. Examples of this include scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, creamed spinach, refried beans and milk shakes. It is very important not to chew on anything until you can feel your tongue and lips. I use a local anesthetic on the lower arch that may cause numbness for up to 12 hours. Avoid hard crisp foods. My rule of thumb is if it hurts at all don't eat it.

**Activities:** Avoid ANY physical exertion or exercise the day of surgery. DO NOT attempt to drive or operate machinery the day of surgery. Most patients may resume normal activity 2 to 3 days after surgery. However, lifting and exercise such as football, soccer, or running should be avoided for 5 to 7 days. The risk of jaw fracture from strenuous sports is significant for up to 6 weeks postoperatively.

**Oral Hygiene:** Do not brush your teeth or rinse your mouth vigorously for 12 hours after surgery. You may begin brushing your teeth gently the day after surgery. You may also rinse your mouth after meals with a teaspoon of salt in an 8 oz(1 cup) of warm water. If you are on a reduced Sodium diet do not rinse with warm salt water.

**Intravenous site:** Some bruising and tenderness is normal at the injection site of the catheter. This usually resolves at the same rate as surgical site healing if not faster.

**Sutures:** Most sutures dissolve away in 3 to 5 days.

**Emergency Contact:** You may contact me at anytime at 832-373-7041. During the day I usually respond faster to email at [DrBloom@DrBloom.com](mailto:DrBloom@DrBloom.com)