

## Post-Operative Instructions: Dental Implants

Congratulations on completing the first step in restoring your teeth with dental implants. As with any surgical procedure, you can expect a certain degree of discomfort during the next few days. Relax as much as possible and avoid all strenuous activities for at least 2 days following your surgery. If at any time you have a general concern or question, please call our office to speak with a doctor. Below are the post-operative instructions necessary to ensure proper healing.

### Medications

You have been given an antibiotic to prevent infection. Please begin taking this as directed until all the medication is finished. The pain medication that you have been given should be taken as directed and with a full stomach, otherwise you may experience nausea and vomiting. If you were prescribed chlorhexidine mouthwash (Peridex™), begin rinsing 2 days following your treatment. Rinse twice a day for 10 days, and do not eat or drink anything for 1 hour after rinsing.

### Swelling

It is normal to experience mild to moderate swelling, peaking at 48 hours. You can help to decrease swelling by applying an ice bag to the affected area for 20 minutes on and then 10 minutes off for the remainder of the day after surgery, and continue to do so for the next day as much as possible. Sleeping with your head elevated also helps reduce swelling.

### Diet

A cool liquid diet is recommended. To help the healing process, for the following week after your surgery be sure to keep yourself hydrated by drinking plenty of liquids and be sure to eat foods high in vitamins and protein. Limit your diet to soft foods such as yogurt, soups, puddings, pasta, and soft cooked eggs. If you wear a denture or partial that will cover the implant site, leave it out during eating to prevent pressure on the implant. Other than the listed foods, do not chew on the implant site during the healing phase (4 months or as long as your doctor recommends).

### Care for Your Implant Site

There may be some bleeding or oozing at the implant site, which is normal for 24 hours following the surgery. If you leave the office with a gauze pack, keep firm steady pressure on the gauze for approximately 1 hour following the surgery, then remove. Following the day of your surgery, it is recommended to rinse your mouth with a warm salt water solution (dissolve 1 teaspoon of salt in 1 cup of warm water) 3-4 times a day for the week following your surgery. Studies have shown a decrease in both short and long-term success rates of dental implants in patients who smoke. If you have thought about quitting smoking, now is a good time to do so. Ask the doctors how they can help.

### Relief of Pain

Some discomfort is to be expected following oral surgery. Immediately upon returning home and before the local anesthesia wears off, **take two 200 mg ibuprofen tablets (Advil®, Motrin®) with one extra strength Tylenol® tablet (500 mg)**. We have found this reduces the amount of narcotic-based pain medication required. Please note you may not exceed 4000 mg of Tylenol per day for a maximum of 7 days (note: the narcotic-based pain medicine contains 325 mg of Tylenol). Some nausea is not uncommon while taking pain relievers. Taking the medication with a light snack and sipping small quantities of carbonated soda can minimize this. If you are taking narcotic-based medication, please note that the medication may make you drowsy.



## Post-Operative Instructions: Dental Implants (Cont.)

**CAUTION:** Refrain from operating a motor vehicle while taking a prescribed narcotic pain medication (ex: hydrocodone, Tylenol with codeine, Vicodin®, Percocet®, and Vicoprofen®). **Do not take more than one prescribed narcotic at a time. Please consult with your doctor if you are unsure about taking ibuprofen or Tylenol, or if you have had previous allergic reactions to these medications.**

### Caution

Patients who were asleep for their procedure **MUST NOT DRIVE FOR 24 HOURS.**

### Smoking and Drinking

Studies have shown that oral surgical wounds take more time to heal if the patient smokes or vapes following surgery. **AVOID SMOKING & VAPING FOR 1 WEEK.** Absolutely no alcoholic beverages for 24 hours after surgery, or while taking prescription pain relievers.