

## **CARE OF THE MOUTH FOLLOWING SURGERY**

### **Pain:**

- Some discomfort is to be expected after surgery. Typically, the discomfort will gradually increase over the first 48-72 hours, and may last for several days.
- Please use your prescription medication as directed to control pain. You may also be able to use **Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) 600-800mg every 8 hours max 2400mg/day or 12 tabs** for up to one week in addition to your prescribed medications. Using ibuprofen on a regular schedule should decrease your need for the prescription pain medications. If you do not use prescription medication for pain, consider alternating **Acetaminophen (Tylenol) max dose 3000mg/day with Ibuprofen** for pain control.
- Prescription pain medication should always be taken with food (**see reverse side for food recommendations**). **NEVER** combine alcohol with pain medication.

### **Antibiotic Therapy:**

- Antibiotics are not routinely prescribed. If you have been prescribed an antibiotic you should be aware of the following:
- Antibiotics can cause several side effects. It is extremely important to read the information that comes with your prescription.
- Stomach upset is a common side effect. Please take your antibiotic with food and/or add an over the counter probiotic.
- If you are currently taking oral contraceptive you should use an alternative method of birth control for the remainder of this cycle.
- If you have been prescribed Clindamycin and are experiencing diarrhea during or after receiving antibiotic therapy please contact our office. You will need to be evaluated for the presence of C.Difficile and treated accordingly.

### **Swelling:**

- Swelling will typically increase over the first 48-72 hours, and then should begin to improve. Keeping your head elevated as much as possible, especially at night, will help. Any activity that increases your heart rate in the first 5 days will increase swelling.
- Please apply ice as much as possible to the affected areas, being sure to protect the skin from prolonged exposure. We recommend application in thirty minute intervals for the first 48 hours. After 48 hours, heat may work better, and can help lessen jaw stiffness.
- Stiffness or limited opening of the jaw is common, and typically improve 10-14 days after surgery.

### **Bleeding:**

- The surgical site may bleed a small amount for a day or two. If the bleeding is heavy, apply tightly folded gauze directly over the area and apply pressure by biting for thirty minutes at a time. Avoid spitting, as this tends to dislodge clots and promote bleeding. Bruising along the lower jaw line may develop after a few days. This is also normal.
- If sutures are present, they will usually fall out on their own in the first week (some types may last longer). It may feel as if your cheek is sutured to your gum tissue. This sensation is normal and will resolve as swelling improves.

### **Diet/Wound Care:**

- Please refer to the opposite page for food suggestions. We also recommend hydration, beginning with clear liquids in small amounts, and then increasing as tolerated.
- Starting tomorrow, rinse your mouth regularly for 3 weeks with either water or salt water, but avoid spitting on the first day.
- Brush your teeth, but avoid brushing directly over the surgical site for 5 days.
- **SMOKING IN ANY AMOUNT** will increase pain and delay healing significantly.

If any unusual symptoms occur or if you have any questions concerning your progress; do not hesitate to call the office **207-772-4063**. Please note that pain medication cannot be refilled outside of office hours.