



## POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

**DRESSING:** The surgical area may have been covered by a putty-like dressing that will protect the area in the first days of healing. If it comes off before the first post-surgical visit and you are comfortable, do not be concerned. Just be sure to keep the areas as clean as possible until your next visit. Otherwise, the dressing and any remaining sutures will be removed per your next scheduled appointment.

**BLEEDING:** Slight oozing for the first several hours after surgery is normal. Cold water held in the mouth will help slow bleeding, or you may gently apply firm pressure directly on the top of the dressing with a cold, moist compress to hasten clotting (a tea bag may work well). If bleeding continues and you become concerned, please call for further instruction and/or assistance.

**RINSING:** Avoid vigorous rinsing for the first 24 hours following surgery. Cold water held in the mouth during the first 12-24 hours may help reduce slight bleeding. After 24 hours you should start warm (not hot) saltwater rinses (1/2 tsp. salt in a tall glass of water) 3-4 times per day for the first week after surgery. After the dressing is removed (or sooner in some cases), a chlorhexidine rinse may be prescribed. This rinse is normally used for 4-6 weeks after surgery.

**EATING:** Maintaining adequate fluid intake during the first 12-24 hours is important to avoid dehydration. In addition, adequate amounts of nourishing foods are essential for proper healing. In general, extremely hot foods should be avoided during the first 12-24 hours, and hard foods and highly seasoned foods should be avoided during the first week. However, eat whatever you can tolerate, but be careful not to disturb the surgical site.

**SWELLING:** Some swelling is normal, and an ice pack held on the cheek or lip over the surgical site for intermittent periods (10-20 minutes on and 10-20 minutes off) during the first 24-48 hours may help reduce swelling and will relieve some discomfort. For any residual swelling after the first 48 hours, heat is encouraged (hot water bottle, heating pad, etc.) to increase circulation and promote healing. If the swelling becomes progressively more severe after 2-3 days, please let us know.

**ORAL HYGIENE:** Continue thorough plaque removal techniques in the areas where you have access. Gentle cleaning can continue in the surgical areas, although the dressing will limit access to only the chewing surfaces of the teeth. However, you must be careful not to disrupt healing areas.

**MEDICATIONS:** Take medications as instructed. Generally, medications should not be taken on an empty stomach. **IMPORTANT:** Driving or operating dangerous equipment while taking narcotics (pain medication) can be very dangerous. Also, you should not consume alcohol while taking narcotics.

**SMOKING AND EXERCISE:** Avoid excessive exertion or exercise for the next 24 hours. Also, if you can't quit completely, you should at least refrain from smoking for the first 24-48 hours to avoid interfering with the healing process.

**GENERAL:** If there is persistent bleeding, severe discomfort that cannot be relieved, extensive swelling, or any other problem that does not appear to be normal, please do not hesitate to contact us at (503) 224-3853 or [Dr. Haghighat's](#) cell phone at (503) 358-2605.