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INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING PERIODONTAL SURGERY

Patient Information

1. SURGICAL DRESSING

The surgical dressing you have in your mouth will harden in approximately one-half hour. Do not rinse, drink, or eat during this time. The dressing protects the gingival tissues and guides healing of the treated area and reduces discomfort. Occasionally small pieces of the dressing break off in the days following surgery. If the uncovered area is small and feels satisfactory, it is perfectly safe to wait until your next appointment. However, if a large piece should break off and the **area is tender**, or if the dressing becomes loose, call the office.

2. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Should be restricted the day of surgery.

3. DIET

Do not chew in the area of the dressing. In most cases, patients are able to continue with a relatively normal diet. However, **do not** chew tough, "crunchy" foods. Do eat a well-balanced soft diet such as broth, soups, ice cream, jello, cereals, custard, baby foods, milk shakes, bread; eggs, cooked vegetables, ground meat, cheese, and puddings such as rice and tapoca. Avoid highly seasoned foods and tart fruit juices. Concentrated alcoholic beverages may cause discomfort temporarily to the surgerized area. Excessive and heavy smoking may cause the dressing to retain stale taste and tars.

4. BLEEDING

You may expect a slight amount of bleeding which will turn your saliva pinkish in color during the remainder of the day and sometimes the next day. However, if you have significant bleeding, please call my office. Bleeding can most generally be controlled through pressure—apply a wet tea bag or moist tightly rolled gauze or clean cloth to the bleeding area and apply pressure for 15 minutes without interruption. This will control most bleeding situations; however, should you have continuing concern, call me at any time.

5. SWELLING

Swelling is often a normal result after surgical procedures. It may persist for several days, but should not cause alarm. Swelling may often be reduced by applying cold packs to the surgical areas for a period of a few hours—these ice packs should be used in 15 minute intervals. The following day ice will no longer be effective and moist heat then will be of more benefit to relieve discomfort and swelling. If swelling is severe or persistent, please call our office. Also, if swelling should **start several days after** surgical intervention please call my office.

6. MEDICATION

You may expect some **soreness** and **discomfort** initially. If needed, you may take aspirin, bufferin, tylenol or the prescribed pain tablets every four hours to relieve discomfort. If you have been given a prescription for an antibiotic, take the **total dosage as prescribed**. If you should have a reaction such as hives, difficulty in breathing or stomach upset, discontinue the medication and call the office immediately.

7. HYGIENE

Do not use your tooth brush on the dressing or the surgerized area. Rinse gently with warm salt water in the area of the surgery. Follow as best you can your normal preventive efforts in brushing and flossing in the areas that were not treated surgically. An excellent mouthwash for use after surgery is one-half teaspoon of salt to a 12 oz. glass of warm water.

8. POSTOPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS

Dressing Removal:

The periodontal dressing and sutures which have been placed in your mouth will be removed at your next appointment. The dressing normally removes quite easily, as do sutures, without significant discomfort and no anesthetic is required. The area will then be cleaned and polished. After this, you may have some sensitivity to heat or cold so I ask that you check before taking very hot or cold foods or liquids into your mouth—this normally is a temporary problem. The tissues may be still tender and another dressing may be placed. The first weeks after periodontal surgery are very significant with regard to healing and regeneration of gingival tissues so I will require that you come in for weekly polishing until the tissues are healed sufficiently for you to carry out adequate daily removal of bacterial plaque.

If any condition or concern develops which seems unusual to you, please call my office at any time. We will also attempt to contact you the day after surgery to see how you are progressing. It is always our hope that you will have minimal problems associated with these procedures and we would like to help in any way possible.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____

