

# POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING PERIODONTAL SURGERY (OPEN FLAP DEBRIDEMENT OR SOFT TISSUE GRAFTING)

## BLEEDING

Slight bleeding may continue for 24–48 hours. This is not unusual and is no cause for alarm. Do not rinse vigorously in the first few hours as this may disrupt the coagulation process. The ice pack provided should be held in place continuously for 30 minutes following the surgery. We recommend repeating this 2 to 3 times later that day. If excessive bleeding occurs, take a moist piece of 2x2 gauze or gauze soaked in a strong tea solution (a tea bag will also work) and apply constant, firm pressure over the bleeding area for 10 minutes. If you are still concerned about bleeding after following these instructions, please call our office.

## SWELLING & BRUISING

You may experience some swelling following surgery and it often takes 3 days before it reaches a maximum. Bruising may also occur. To help decrease this, ice packs can be applied outside of the face over the area of surgery, 10 minutes at a time, 4–5 times throughout the day. Ice cubes in a plastic bag or a bag of frozen vegetables work well as an ice pack.

## DISCOMFORT & MEDICATIONS

The amount of pain or discomfort varies from patient to patient. The medication given to you must be used as prescribed and should control your pain. Do not be alarmed if you need to take the medication for several days. If pain is not controlled with the medications, please call our office. If you have minimal pain, over-the-counter antiinflammatory drugs work very well. If an antibiotic is prescribed, it is to be taken until finished. The local anesthetic will wear off within 1 to 4 hours following surgery. It is important to take your pain medication prior to discomfort. It is also important to eat prior to taking pain medication and to drink plenty of fluids. Not eating can cause nausea and vomiting.

## CONTRACEPTIVES

All female patients utilizing birth control pills, please be advised that if the doctor prescribes the use of antibiotics, an alternative form of birth control must be utilized during that period of time.

## ORAL HYGIENE

Avoid brushing the surgical site for 1 week, but remember that the remainder of your mouth should remain clean. After the first week, begin gentle tooth brushing with a soft toothbrush in the surgical area. Brush only the teeth and do not brush the gum area. Discomfort is minimized by softening the bristles of your brush under hot water. Flossing may be resumed after 7 days. Remember, for the best healing the area must be plaque-free. If prescribed: start using the Peridex rinse the night of surgery then rinse twice a day for 30 seconds for 14 days after surgery. A salt-water rinse (1/2 tsp of salt & warm water) can be used 3-4 times a day to reduce soreness.

## SUTURES

Sutures (“stitches”) are used and are selected based on the type of surgical procedure completed. Some sutures are resorbable (dissolvable) and may come out a few days following surgery. Do not be alarmed by this.

## PERIODONTAL DRESSING

You may have a plastic-like material, a periodontal pack, around your teeth following surgery. This acts as an oral bandage. It may come off after a few days, which is not a problem. If it remains in place, we will remove it at your post-operative appointment. You can brush this area gently to keep it clean.