

Patient Instructions after Periodontal Surgery

Updated 12/2024

Swelling and Bruising: Usually peaks at day 3, and may take 3 weeks to subside, especially with sinus surgery and upper canine implants. Use ice packs to the outside of the face at 20-minute intervals for the first 2-3 days even without initial swelling to prevent pain/swelling. Ice numbs tissues further reducing pain. Sleep with an elevated head if swelling is significant.

Pain Control: Discomfort usually peaks at day 3, and can last 2 weeks. Control pain and swelling before the anesthesia wears off with over the counter medications below for the first 4 days.

-Advil (Ibuprofen): 3 tablets (600mg) every 6 hrs, Alternatively Aleve (Naproxen): 1 tablet (220mg) every 12 hrs.

-Tylenol XS or PM (Acetaminophen) 2 tablets (1000mg) every 6 hrs. PM can be taken before bed to help you sleep. Tylenol can be taken with Advil or Aleve for extra pain control. Don't take Advil and Aleve at the same time.

Prescription narcotics (Vicodin or generic Norco) can be taken with Advil/Aleve, but not with Tylenol.

Infection: Take antibiotics as directed Azithromycin (next dose tomorrow for 5days) OR Amoxicillin (next dose 12hrs from surgery time, 2x/day for 5 days), next dose; take on time, finish all tablets. If you experience rash, or severe vomiting or diarrhea, please discontinue and call us immediately. Call if there is a bad taste or increased swelling after completing the antibiotics.

Bleeding: Oozing is normal for several days and overnight. Do not worry if blood clots are found in the morning. Do not overexert yourself. Do not rinse vigorously, or spit excessively, which causes more bleeding or dry socket. Use 30 min of firm pressure with gauze or a damp tea bag for heavy bleeding from the palate or a socket. No gauze around gum/bone grafts, or tooth transplants.

Sutures (Stitches) or Dressing:

-We remove non-dissolving sutures (white or blue) in 2-3 weeks. Dissolving sutures (tan) fall off on their own at about 2 weeks.

-Palatal gum grafting: a translucent purple adhesive dressing may be attached to stitches in the roof of the mouth or around the graft itself, can feel rough to the tongue, and can fall off before your next appointment. If they begin dangling, you can cut them with scissors cleaned with rubbing alcohol. Do not pull on them.

-Tooth uncovering: a periodontal dressing (pink rubbery covering) may be attached to the tooth in the roof of the mouth or around the grafted teeth. Please call if it dislodges a day or two following surgery.

-Please avoid viewing or touching the surgical area. Please call if white material becomes visible from the grafted site.

Implant or Sinus Procedure: Lower jaw implants: If the lower lip is still numb in the morning, immediately call/email Dr. Nicoara, to avoid permanent damage. **Sinus procedure:** A single nose bleed immediately after, or up to 1 week after surgery, is possible. Do not withhold a sneeze, blow your nose forcefully, perform strenuous activities, or bend forward excessively.

Mouth Care: Brush and floss all other areas of the mouth, but do not touch the surgical site to avoid dislodging sutures or blood clots. Start gentle rinsing 24 hours after surgery until sutures removed using the prescription Peridex rinse (chlorhexidine gluconate) used for one minute three times a day. You must wait 2 hours after brushing the rest of the teeth with toothpaste before using the Peridex (toothpaste deactivates Peridex), OR simply substitute the toothpaste with the Peridex by dipping your clean tooth brush in the Peridex and brush the non-surgical areas (DO NOT brush the surgical areas) then rinse the surgical area with the Peridex. Get the automatic refill on the Peridex if you run out. Peridex may cause temporary, non-permanent staining of the teeth and tongue that disappears once you stop using it. Persistent staining is removed at your next cleaning. If this box is checked, salt water (1/2 tsp salt per cup of water) rinse after every time you eat is allowed instead of Peridex. If given a soft toothbrush, start brushing after 2 weeks of rinsing, use for 2 weeks.

Partial Denture: Leave your Essix tray in "continuously" for the first 2 weeks to prevent swelling which will keep you from being able to wear it. If you leave it out of the mouth, do not force it in risking damage to the surgical area. You can eat soft foods while wearing it, but remove it to rinse your mouth and clean it with a toothbrush after eating. Use one finger on each side in the back pulling towards the chewing surface to remove it without breaking it. Do not wear any appliance not provided by our office if we have not approved it. Bring your retainer to your suture removal appointment for adjustment.

Nutrition: An adequate diet improves healing. Eat cool foods for the first 48 hours, then warmer foods are fine. Avoid hard (nuts) or sticky (peanut butter) foods until sutures are removed. Cut food into small pieces and do not chew on the surgical site. Consider smoothies, yogurt, apple sauce, cottage cheese; soft chicken/ground beef; tuna/pasta/bean salads (think grocery store cold deli meals); broth or soup (not hot initially); cooled mashed potatoes, oatmeal or scrambled eggs; food supplements (Carnation instant breakfast, Ensure, etc) ... and drink plenty of fluids. Do not use a straw (use a spoon), no popsicles or sucking ice, to avoid dislodging blood clots by sucking forcefully. Excessive alcohol can cause lack of surgical wound care.

Smoking/Vaping: Smoking impedes your healing and reduce success of your surgery. You should not smoke for at least 1 week prior to and after surgery. You may use a patch or some other nicotine replacement post-operatively, or try to quit altogether.

Activity/Stress: Be quiet for 48-72 hours after surgery. No heavy lifting, exercise, bending forward, or work that increases heart rate and blood flow causing further bleeding, swelling and pain. Stop activities causing throbbing, pain or bleeding; wait 2 days before trying the activity again. Reduce stress with good sleep and relaxing activities (meditation, reading, etc) to improve healing. Do not plan significant travel for at least the first 2 weeks after surgery, and be available for suture removal in 2-3 weeks.

If it is after hours, you can reach Dr. Nicoara at: doctor@nicoaraperio.com

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