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ORAL SURGERY & IMPLANT DENTISTRY

Post-Operative Instructions: Exposure & Bonding

Please follow these instructions closely to support a smooth recovery.

Caring for the Surgical Site

A small bracket and chain have been attached to the exposed tooth, which your orthodontist will use to gently guide it into place over the coming months. Avoid pulling, tugging, or playing with the chain with your tongue or fingers, since this can dislodge it.

Bleeding

Some bleeding or redness in your saliva is normal and to be expected for the first 48 hours. If there is excessive bleeding, bite down on gauze placed over the surgical site, keeping it in place for 30 minutes. After this, the gauze can be exchanged every 30 minutes and replaced until the bleeding slows down or the gauze is pink.

Swelling & Bruising

Swelling is expected and typically peaks 3 to 5 days after surgery. Some bruising may also occur, which is normal. For the first 24 hours, apply an ice pack to the outside of your face in 20-minutes-on, 20-minutes-off intervals. This step is optional, but it may help reduce some of the swelling.

Pain Management

Take 600 mg of ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin), ideally before the numbness wears off — usually 1 to 2 hours after surgery. Three hours later, take 500–1000 mg of acetaminophen (Tylenol). Continue alternating between 600 mg ibuprofen and 500–1000 mg acetaminophen every 3 hours as needed for pain control. If your pain isn't controlled and you were prescribed a narcotic pain medication, you may take this in place of the acetaminophen. We recommend eating or drinking something before taking any pain medication to help avoid an upset stomach. Do not operate a motor vehicle or machinery, or consume alcohol, while taking narcotic pain medication.

Antibiotics

If you were prescribed an antibiotic, take it as directed to help prevent infection. If you develop a rash or other unfavorable reaction, stop taking it and call our office right away.

Diet

On the day of surgery, drink plenty of liquids and eat soft foods. Good options include protein drinks, mashed potatoes, pasta, eggs, soup, yogurt, soft fruits, etc. Avoid hot liquids for 1 week. The day after surgery, advance your diet as tolerated.

Oral Hygiene

You may resume normal brushing and flossing the day after surgery, but be gentle around the surgical site and chain. Avoid flossing directly through the chain. Starting the day after surgery, rinse gently with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt dissolved in 8 oz of warm water) at least 4 to 5 times a day and after meals.

Smoking & Vaping

Avoid smoking or vaping for at least 48 hours after surgery, though ideally for 2 full weeks. Both can significantly slow healing and increase the risk of complications.

Activity

The day of surgery, avoid strenuous activities and heavy lifting, since these can increase bleeding. Resume normal activities as tolerated.

Follow-Up with Your Orthodontist

Your orthodontist will begin guiding the tooth into position using the attached chain. Please keep your scheduled follow-up appointments with them.

Sutures (Stitches)

If you had stitches placed, they typically dissolve on their own within 7 to 10 days. If they come out sooner than that, there's no need to worry.

Questions before your visit? Call us at (847) 367-4190.
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