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Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery  
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**Post-Operative Instructions**

- Gauze Packing** Keep gauze in place for 1 hour, maintaining constant pressure over the surgical site, and then discard. Do not chew, speak or spit during this time because it interferes with clot formation and may cause more bleeding. A slight ooze of blood may continue for 24-48 hours. This is normal and requires no additional treatment.
- Continued Bleeding** If the surgical site continues to bleed significantly (not oozing), clear the clots from your mouth and place a gauze sponge, moistened with water, in your mouth. A moistened tea bag may also be used. Apply constant pressure for 45 minutes to 1 hour and then discard.
- Numbness** Care must be taken not to bite or chew on numb areas of cheeks, lips and tongue. Numbness can last from 1-8 hours depending on the type of anesthesia used.
- Ice Pack** If ice is recommended, leave the ice pack in place continuously for 8 hours. Ice may be used intermittently for up to 24 hours following surgery to prevent excess swelling. Post-operative swelling can be expected for several days before it begins to decrease.
- Moist Heat** After the first 24 hours, apply moist heat (hot water bottle, heating pad, hot towel) to the outside of the face near the surgical area. This will increase comfort and reduce swelling and stiffness.
- Rinsing & Spitting** Do not rinse or spit for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours you may rinse, GENTLY, with warm salt water 3 times per day and after meals. No rinsing with mouth wash for 1 week.
- Diet** Soft foods and beverages that are cold, cool or warm are necessary for the first 24 hours. Do not consume alcoholic beverages. After 24 hours you may eat whatever you're comfortable eating. Do NOT use a straw for the first 3 days to avoid interference with clot formation.
- Oral Hygiene** No brushing in the first 24 hours. The day after surgery you may brush your remaining teeth, avoiding the surgical site(s).
- Smoking** No smoking for the first 24 hours. It is preferable to refrain from smoking for 3 days to avoid interference with clot formation.
- Stitches** If sutures (stitches) are placed, and are not resorbable, you will need to have them removed in approximately 7 days. Be sure to keep your post-operative appointment.
- Medications** Please take all prescribed medications as directed and follow instructions regarding limitations while on medications. Antibiotics should be taken until they are gone. Pain medication should be taken, as needed, for discomfort. NEVER mix alcohol with prescribed medications as severe complications may arise.
- Sedation** For those patients who had IV sedation, do not operate dangerous machinery or drive for the first 24 hours.
- Concerns** Please call our office if you have any additional concerns or questions.