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## Postoperative Instructions following an Apicoectomy

After your procedure, a certain amount of bleeding, discomfort or pain, swelling and bruising are normal post-operative experiences. Our patients who receive IV sedation, adult or child, should not be left alone. A parent, guardian, caretaker, or responsible adult (able to provide full assistance and transportation needs) must remain with the patient to provide any necessary post-operative assistance until the next morning. The patient should not drive for 24 hours.

### Immediately Following Surgery

- If medications are prescribed, prescriptions are sent electronically to the pharmacy patient selected.
- **Pain medications on an empty stomach may cause nausea.** Once home, remove gauze and have the patient eat soft, non-chew foods (See Diet section).
- It is best to eat at least 30 minutes prior to taking medications to minimize nausea.
- **Start with Ibuprofen (Advil<sup>®</sup>, Motrin<sup>®</sup>):** Take the doctor recommended dose of Ibuprofen (200mg tablets). If taking the liquid form, follow the instructions on the bottle based off weight. (See Pain Management section )
- In the first 24 hours after surgery use the cold pack provided. Apply the cold pack to the cheek, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off the day of surgery. **DO NOT USE ICE AFTER THE FIRST 24 HOURS.** (See Swelling / Jaw Muscle Discomfort section)
- Avoid strenuous activity the day of surgery. **CAUTION: If you suddenly sit up or stand from a lying position you may become dizzy. If you are lying down following surgery, make sure you sit for one minute before standing.**
- **Do not worry about sutures coming out.** Sutures are usually placed to control bleeding. The sutures placed are dissolvable. If sutures come out on the day of surgery, there is no need to replace them.

### Diet

- Patients should drink plenty of fluids.
- **Patients should only consume a soft, non-chew diet for the first 1-2 days following surgery.** Examples: Jell-o, pudding, yogurt, applesauce, oatmeal, grits, soups, ice cream, eggs, creamed potatoes, etc. Allow hot foods and drinks to cool to room temperature for the first 24 hours. **Gradually return to a normal diet as tolerated.**

### Oral Hygiene

- **DO NOT SMOKE FOR 3 DAYS POST SURGERY**
- You may resume brushing your teeth the day after surgery, being very gentle around surgical sites.

### Bleeding

Bleeding may continue for a few hours after your procedure. Mild spotting of blood on gauze 1-2 days after surgery is not a concern. Excessive, active bleeding is not typical after a couple of hours, with an awake patient holding effective pressure. Sleeping patients bleed longer because they must be awake to hold firm pressure, and the numbing can wear off before the bleeding stops making it uncomfortable to maintain pressure. It is best to control bleeding while awake and remove the gauze before sleeping.

**Direct pressure MUST be applied to the surgical site to control bleeding.**

### **Swelling / Jaw Muscle Discomfort**

Swelling is normal with oral surgery. The patient should keep their head elevated while resting or sleeping for the first day after surgery to minimize swelling. Swelling may be worse on the third day after surgery.

- In the first 24 hours after surgery use the cold pack provided. Apply the cold pack to the cheek, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off the day of surgery.
- After the first 24 hours, the cold pack can make the jaw stiff and hurt more so shifting to a heating pad helps healing and jaw stiffness. This can be done several times throughout the day, using the same gel pack provided after surgery.
- If waking with pain or jaw stiffness, during the night or first thing in the morning, please call our office for additional instructions.

### **Pain Management**

- **Take medications as directed.** Eat 30 minutes before starting medications to prevent nausea.
- **Start with Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®):** Take the doctor recommended dose of Ibuprofen (200mg tablets). If taking the liquid form, follow the instructions on the bottle based off weight.
- **Follow with Acetaminophen (Tylenol®):** After 3-4 hours from taking the Ibuprofen, take the recommended dose of Tylenol. The dosage is based off weight, therefore follow the directions on the bottle.
- **Alternate:** Continue alternating between Ibuprofen and Tylenol every 3-4 hours as needed for pain relief so each medication is taken on its own six-hour schedule.
- **Follow Doctor's Instructions:** Always follow the specific instructions provided by Dr. Williams regarding dosage, frequency, and duration of medication. If prescribed a stronger pain medication, take as directed in addition to ibuprofen. If you were given a prescription pain reliever, follow the directions on the bottle.
- Write down the medication taken, time, and dose to keep track of how much medication you have taken and when. **Do not exceed the maximum daily dose** of any medication.

### **Office Calls**

- If you have any further questions or concerns, please call the office at **(864) 458-9800 or (828) 862 8648**. During regular office hours (8 AM to 5 PM Monday through Thursday and 8 AM to 12 PM on Friday) there will be team members available to answer questions. Our toll-free number is 1-888-531-7393, if needed.
- After hours, or on days the office is closed, Dr. Williams can be paged through our answering service for **urgent or emergency calls only**. Please allow extra time when calling the office, after hours, for the answering service to pick up. If your call is not returned within 30 minutes, please contact the answering service again. Please remember Dr. Williams may be handling other hospital emergencies.