

# Post-op Care Instructions for Periodontal/Oral Surgery Patients

**Wound healing may be less predictable in the mouth because the muscles are constantly in motion with speaking, eating, swallowing and brushing. You can improve your healing, have less swelling and fewer complications if you follow these instructions carefully.**

MEDICATIONS: Please take medications as directed below. Please start the medications (especially pain medications) as early as possible following the surgery.

\_\_ Finish prescribed antibiotics (examples: Amoxicillin, Clindamycin, Z-Pak, Azithromycin, etc.)

\_\_ Alternate taking 2 tablets of Advil & 2 tablets of regular strength Tylenol (or 1 tablet of extra strength Tylenol) every 3 hours. Please continue taking the medications throughout the day. Immediately before your bedtime, take the next medication despite it has not been 3 hours since you took the last medication. During sleep, there is no need to take medications unless you wake up with pain. Continue taking the medications for the first four days. Please take them even if you do not have too much discomfort/pain as I anticipate you may have a sudden "spike" of pain/discomfort around 3rd & 4th day following the surgery (unfortunately, this is a part of "normal" healing.). On the 5<sup>th</sup> day, you may taper the dose as needed for pain (for example, take 1 tab every 3 hours instead of two) and you may gradually stop taking these medications if you do not experience any discomfort/pain.

*For example, your first 4 days would look like this;*

<i>Time</i>	<i>7:00 am</i>	<i>10:00 am</i>	<i>1:00 pm</i>	<i>4:00 pm</i>	<i>7:00 pm</i>	<i>9:00 pm</i>
	<i>wake up</i>					<i>bedtime</i>
<i>Medication</i>	<i>3 Advils</i>	<i>2 Tylenols**</i>	<i>3 Advils</i>	<i>2 Tylenols**</i>	<i>3 Advils</i>	<i>2 Tylenols**</i>

*\*\* you may take 1 Extra strength Tylenol instead of 2 Regular Strength Tylenols*

<b>Brand Name</b>	<b>1 Advil</b>	<b>1 Tylenol</b>	<b>1 Extra strength Tylenol</b>
<b>Generic Name</b>	<b>200mg Ibuprofen</b>	<b>325mg Acetaminophen</b>	<b>500mg Acetaminophen</b>

.....Take pain medications as directed if you are prescribed specifically.

Probiotic yogurt or over the counter probiotic may reduce antibiotic-related diarrhea. Please call the office to report an allergic reaction to any prescribed drug. If you develop a rash in response to a prescribed drug, you should stop the medication immediately and take Benedryl or an antihistamine.

**o DISCOMFORT / PAIN:** Discomfort / Pain is a normal part of the healing process and should be anticipated. You will experience a sudden "spike" of discomfort / pain usually around 3rd -4th day following the surgery. This is exactly why I recommend taking pain medications until the end of 3rd day even if you do not experience discomfort/pain. (Discomfort/pain is easy to prevent; however, it is hard to control once you have it). If you are taking a narcotic medication for your discomfort/pain (for example, Tylenol-3, Vicodin, Percocet or any medication containing codeine), do not drive.

**o SWELLING:** Swelling is a normal part of the healing process and can be minimized with ice packs applied gently to the outside of your face and jaw for the first 24-36 hours after surgery. Repeat the pattern of holding the ice pack on the face in the area of surgery off and on for 15 minutes at a time. Do not press hard or rub the area or you risk disturbing the surgical site. The swelling usually peaks in 3<sup>rd</sup> day following the surgery and tapers off after that. Ice packs will minimize the amount of swelling you experience during this peak. If you do not ice the area, you will have swelling that

will taper off after about 3-7 days. This swelling may put pressure on the sutures and the surgical site. You will improve your chances of healing with a better result if you minimize swelling by icing the area for the first two days.

o **BLEEDING:** A small amount of bleeding or oozing is normal and usually occurs on the day of surgery and sometimes, the following 3-4 days. If the surgical site is bleeding, you may place a cold, wet teabag/gauze in the area and apply continuous pressure by either biting down or applying gentle finger pressure for 20-60 minutes as needed. If the dressing is in place, use two fingers to apply even pressure on both sides of the dressing. Keep your head elevated. When you lie down, use two pillows to keep your head slightly raised. Do not spit, do not swish vigorously and do not drink through a straw because this may initiate bleeding. For 3 days do not exercise or do anything that increases your heart rate such as strenuous physical activity because this may raise blood pressure and initiate bleeding in your mouth.

o **CLEANLINESS:** Do not use an electric toothbrush anywhere in your mouth until your follow-up visit. A manual toothbrush with a small amount of toothpaste may be used for the rest of your mouth as well as floss. Try not to stretch your cheeks near the surgical site as this might pull on the sutures. Do not brush anywhere in or near the surgical site(s) until **1 week and 3 weeks for a Gum graft** . Do not rinse for the rest of the day after the procedure. You may rinse GENTLY with lukewarm salt water or antiseptic mouthwash if prescribed, starting in the morning after the surgery and use it twice a day. You may either hold the mouthwash in your mouth for one minute. **Please remember; Vigorous rinsing is the most common cause of surgical failure as you will seriously disturb the surgical site. Do not use peroxide.**

o **FOOD:** For the first 24 hours, do not eat HOT foods or HOT liquids. Heat may cause an increase in bleeding from the surgical site. Eat a soft diet such as pasta, meatloaf, fish, chicken, cooked vegetables, smoothies or yogurt. Avoid crunchy foods such as hard breakfast cereal, hard crusted bread, raw vegetables, chips, popcorn or nuts. Chew on the opposite side and cut your food up into small pieces. Eat a balanced diet and maintain adequate fluid intake. Usually you will need to stay on a soft diet for 2-4 weeks but follow Dr. Guze/Staff's instructions. Nutritional drinks such as "Boost" are very helpful.

o **SUTURES:** Do not tug or remove your sutures. Follow The Doctor /staffs orders for your post-operative visits. We use both dissolvable and non-dissolvable sutures. The Doctor /staff needs to see you for your follow-up to evaluate your healing progress and remove sutures if needed.

o **DRESSING:** If a periodontal dressing has been placed, do not disturb it. It will most likely come off before your next appointment. Please dispose of it. This is not an emergency and you will not need to have it replaced. Do not pull on the sutures if the dressing is lost. If the dressing is still in place at your follow-up visit, we will remove it at that time.

o **REST:** Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours and get adequate rest. Absolutely no smoking for 2 weeks.

o **OTHERS:** The Doctor will specify any of the followings that may apply to your situation.

\_\_\_ Avoid looking at the surgical site. This is another common cause of surgical failure.

\_\_\_ Often with **Connective tissue grafts** a white material is exposed. Do not be alarmed as this is normally a part of good healing and will be removed.

\_\_\_ Excessive bruising and swelling are expected.

\_\_\_ Avoid blowing your nose, you may experience normal oozing from your nostril on side of surgery. Apply saline nasal mists 2-4Xdaily for 1 week.

\_\_\_ Keep the surgical dressing on the site as long as it is not loose. Remove with gentle pressure and discard if this happens.

\_\_\_ I anticipate some **bone particles** to come out as part of the normal healing process.

\_\_\_ On occasion, **temporary numbness** of the lip and chin or palate may occur. Please call the office to let us know.

\_\_\_ If temporary or permanent dentures are placed return to office if sore spots develop.

\_\_\_ **Dry Socket:** Occurs frequently following extractions especially with smokers. Following 3 days, pain in site increases instead of improving. Please return to office for placement of medication in site.

If you have any questions, please contact the **office** or **Dr. Guze's cell phone at 617-721-0707**. If leaving a voice mail / sending a text message, please include your name, dental clinic name, date of surgery, and treatment received.

