



## **Post-Op Instructions for Tooth Extraction & Bone Grafting**

At The Village Dental Center, we ensure that our patients are numb, comfortable, and relaxed before beginning their bone grafting or tooth extractions. However, slight soreness or discomfort is to be expected afterward. To minimize this and give yourself a safe recovery, remember these important post-operative instructions:

### **ANTIBIOTICS**

If you're prescribed an antibiotic, start taking it the first day (unless directed otherwise) and use to completion. This medication can sometimes cause an upset stomach, which is why we recommend taking it with food and plenty of liquid.

### **IBUPROFEN**

If we prescribed ibuprofen, start taking it the day of the bone graft or extraction and continue for 2 days. After that, you can still take it as needed for pain. Do not use ibuprofen for more than one week.

### **PAIN PILLS**

Take one pain pill as soon as you can after surgery because it will usually work better if taken before the numbness wears off. After that, take it for 24 hours and then as needed. Take any narcotic pain pills with food and/or plenty of liquid. Do not drive after taking any narcotic pain pill and do not take them with sleeping pills or alcohol.

### **ICE BAG**

Use a cold pack (or a plastic bag of frozen peas) to the face over the area where the procedure was done for 10 minutes at a time, twice an hour, for the first 6 hours. You can periodically use an ice bag the rest of the day of surgery and the next day. If you use the ice bag as directed, you should have less swelling than you would have otherwise. Less swelling means less pain. Do not use hot packs or a hot water bottle.

### **SLEEP SOMEWHAT INCLINED**

For the first 2 nights after the procedure, sleep in a recliner chair or with your head propped up in bed. However, a recliner is better because it ensures that your head stays upright. If you keep your head above your heart level for the first 2 days, it will significantly cut down on post-op swelling, leading to less discomfort.

### **SWELLING**

Most people get some swelling and, if they do, it usually happens about 48 to 72 hours after the surgery. Using an ice bag and sleeping inclined as directed above will help a great deal with keeping it to a minimum.

### **ORAL HYGIENE**

Do not use a water-pic or an electric toothbrush around the surgical area for 4 weeks after the procedure. After that, it should be OK. Do not floss around the tooth/teeth worked on for 1 week, so you don't accidentally take out any of the stitches.

### **STITCHES AND "BARRIER MEMBRANE"**

The stitches and the barrier membrane over the extraction site maybe non-dissolvable and will need to be removed about 2 to 3 weeks later. In the situation where resorbable stitches are placed, they will resorb within two weeks.

### **SALT-WATER RINSES**

After 48 hours, rinse your mouth out, but don't swish, with warm salt water (1/2-tsp. salt in 8-ounce glass of warm water). Hold this in your mouth for 30 seconds and let it fall out of your mouth-do not spit. Do these 4 to 5 times per day, for 7 days

### **EXERCISE**

It's important to avoid strenuous exercise for the first 7 days. Strenuous physical activity may increase post-operative pain or cause post-operative bleeding and swelling. Less activity will result in less pain.

### **TOUCHING THE SURGICAL SITE**

It is important that the surgical site remains untouched during the initial stages of healing. We recommend that you avoid stretching your mouth to look at the site and avoid playing with your tongue on the surgical sites.

### **BLEEDING**

It's completely normal to have "pink" saliva for a few days after surgery. If you have bleeding, wipe the area clean of any "blood clots" first. It must be thoroughly cleaned first. Then, apply gentle (it doesn't have to be hard) pressure to the extraction site for 10 straight minutes with a soaking wet tea bag (black tea works the best), or a soaking wet gauze pad, or clean washcloth, etc. Be sure it is soaking wet because if not, the clot will stick to it and it can start bleeding again once you pull away. If it won't stop, call us.

### **FOOD**

Stay on a soft diet, chew away from the extracted tooth/teeth and avoid any foods that would be more likely to get stuck in the extraction site—popcorn, corn, nuts, and seeds are some examples. Do this for at least 2-3 weeks. Avoid, citric juices, carbonated beverages or acidic foods, like tomatoes, which may make it hurt, but won't damage the graft healing.

For the first 7 days, avoid hot foods or drinks. Consider a nutritional food supplement like Carnation Instant Breakfast, Ensure, or Slim-Fast. Ensure also makes a product called Glucerna for diabetics. After 5 weeks, there should be no eating restrictions. Don't use straws for the 48 hours.

**Food You Can Eat after Surgery:** Apple sauce, yogurt (w/o seeds) Soups (warm – not HOT), eggs, jell-o, well-cooked veggies, fish, soft pasta noodles, pudding, cottage cheese, deli meats

### **SMOKING**

Smokers have a much higher incidence of dry sockets. No smoking for 48 hours after extraction(s). If you do smoke, keep it 5 cigarettes or less per day and only smoke half of the cigarette. No cigars or pipes. Do this for at least 6 weeks, but it's best to avoid smoking altogether.