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## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

(Please Read Carefully)

Surgery of the oral cavity is similar to surgery in other parts of the body and requires careful attention to post-operative instructions. Only by doing so will there be a minimal amount of side effects.

1. Do not disturb the wound with the finger, or by sucking on it. Bite on the gauze pad for a minimum of one hour. The gauze may be replaced every 15 minutes if necessary to control bleeding. Discontinue gauze once bleeding has subsided. This usually occurs in the first 1 – 2 hours.
2. Do not rinse the mouth for 12 hours following surgery. Do not drink through a straw.
3. **Hygiene:** Mouthwashes should not be used the day of the operation. A warm salt and water mouthwash (strength: one teaspoon of salt to one cup of warm water) should be used several times per day, especially after meals. These rinses should begin the day after surgery.
4. **Swelling:** is to be expected in most cases, often reaching it's maximum in 48 hours, then disappearing spontaneously in a further 2 - 3 days. In an attempt to minimize the swelling and relieve discomfort, an ice bag should be applied to the face, a ½ hour on a ½ off....for the first 24 to 48 hours following surgery. Do Not apply heat. There is no need to remain indoors, "avoid drafts" or cover the swelling.
5. **Bleeding:** It is normal for the saliva to be slightly streaked with blood for about one day. If excessive bleeding is present, fold the provided gauze into a firm pad and place directly over the operative area and maintain steady pressure for 20 minutes or longer. Continue for 1 – 1 ½ hours after surgery, changing it every 20 minutes. If the bleeding does not subside call our office for further instructions. A teabag may be substituted for the gauze.
6. **Pain:** Take prescription medication as directed. Start before the local anaesthetic wears off. Do not wait for pain to begin. Keep ahead of medication. It is much easier to prevent pain. It still takes 30 – 40 minutes for pain medication to be effective after being ingested.
7. **Alternative birth control methods are advised during use of antibiotics.**
8. **Discoloration:** A bruising of the skin sometimes occurs and disappears spontaneously in approximately one week. No treatment is usually indicated.
9. **Diet:** Cold or lukewarm liquids may be taken for the first 4 – 6 hours following your return home. A soft diet is usually recommended for a few days. Avoid alcohol and hot drinks on the day of the operation.
10. **Activities:** After leaving the office or hospital, go directly home and keep physical activity to a minimum for the remainder of the day.
11. **Miscellaneous:** Pain in the ear, slight difficulty in swallowing, difficulty in opening and closing the jaw and some local discoloration of the skin in the neck are additional signs and symptoms which occur with varying frequency. These findings are usually normal.

DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL OUR OFFICE AT ANY TIME IF IN DOUBT  
REGARDING THE INSTRUCTIONS OR SHOULD PROBLEMS ARISE