

# Dental Implants- Post Operative Instructions

**Assistance:** Following surgery, your reflexes, depth perception and judgment will be impaired for several hours. A responsible party should stay with you for the remainder of the day to assist with meals, medication, navigation to the rest room, etc. If your procedure was for 'Stage II' (uncovering the implant), and you are not having IV sedation, you may drive yourself home.

**Bed Rest:** If your procedure involved placing a dental implant(s), plan to rest for the remainder of the day with your head elevated about 30 degrees. Advance activity the next day, but take it easy; too much activity can increase swelling. If your procedure was for 'Stage II', you may resume normal activities.

**Swelling/Bleeding:** After placement of dental implants, some degree of bruising and/or swelling is to be expected. Maximum swelling occurs within 48 hours following surgery and may last for several days. Apply ice packs to the outside of your cheek(s) every 15-20 minutes for the first 24 hours.

Blood in your saliva is normal for the first day or two. Place pressure on the area with the gauze provided in your post op pack, or use a moist tea bag and gently apply pressure for 10-15 minutes. If bleeding continues or is heavy, please call our office.

If you are having upper implants placed, it is not unusual to have a nosebleed within the first few days following surgery. Should this occur, pack nostrils with the gauze provided, and relax with your head elevated. The bleeding should stop shortly.

**Brushing/Rinsing:** Brush your teeth as usual, keeping your mouth as clean as possible throughout your recovery. Avoid touching the bristles of your toothbrush to the area of surgery. Avoid water picks and electric tooth brushes for 2 weeks following surgery. The day after surgery, rinse with warm salt water twice a day. Avoid vigorous rinsing. If a prescription rinse has been ordered use as directed.

Leave partials or denture(s) out unless otherwise instructed or until the doctor reinserts it for you.

**Prescriptions:** You may begin taking medication after you have had fluids or something to eat. Take all prescribed medications as directed. The antibiotic must be taken until finished. DO NOT drive a car, operate machinery or drink alcoholic beverages while taking prescribed pain medications.

**Stiches:** The stiches used will dissolve in 7-10 days following surgery. It is not unusual for small pieces of sutures to come out prior to this time. If the sutures need to be removed, you will be notified, and an appointment will be made for you. Avoid playing with your implant or caps with your tongue.

**Diet Tips:** Avoid the area of surgery with chewing, as chewing on an implant can damage it. Drink plenty of fluids throughout your recovery to avoid dehydration. Continue with this diet until you are instructed otherwise. Avoid mobility at the site of the implant(s) until the healing phase is complete (2-6 months).

**Full Denture Patients:** For the first few months following surgery, you will need to be on a soft diet where the implants were placed. Foods such as pudding, applesauce, scrambled eggs, soft flaky fish, pasta and casseroles are recommended. The soft diet can last as long as 2-6 months. Your surgeon will advise you regarding how long you need to continue the soft diet.

**Partial Denture Patients:** Chew foods only in the areas where you have natural teeth remaining. Do not chew hard food in the area of your implants for as long as 2-6 months. Your surgeon will advise you regarding how long you need to continue the soft diet.

**Numbness:** Due to the local anesthetic, there may be numbness in the surgery site that may last 6-8 hours.

**IV Site:** If medication was given intravenously, you may have some tenderness or bruising around the site of injection. Moist heat (warm, wet cloth) or dry heat (heating pad on low heat) to the area the next day will help to ease any discomfort.

**Post-Operative Implant Hygiene:** The first year following placement of your implant, oral hygiene maintenance will be required every 3 months to 6 months as directed by your dentist.

**Other Important Information:** DO NOT smoke or use smokeless tobacco during your healing process. The tars and nicotine may delay healing or cause prolonged bleeding. Bisphosphonate therapy (Fosamax, Boniva, etc.), has been shown to cause osteonecrosis of the jaws which may result in loss of your implant(s).

**For Women Only:** Do not breast feed for 12 hours if you were sedated for surgery. If you are using oral contraceptives, please note that antibiotics and other medication may interfere with their effectiveness. An alternative form of birth control should be used for one complete cycle of birth control pills after the course of antibiotics or other medication is complete.

**Questions?** IF you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call our office. (417) 621-0500

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