

## Patient Instructions after Periodontal Surgery

UPDATED 4/2022

**Swelling and Bruising:** Usually peaks at day 3, and may take 3 weeks to subside, especially with sinus surgery and upper canine implants. Use ice packs to the outside of the face at 20-minute intervals for the first 2-3 days even without initial swelling to prevent pain/swelling. Ice numbs tissues further reducing pain. Sleep with an elevated head.

**Pain Control:** Discomfort usually peaks at day 3, and can last for 2 weeks. Control pain and swelling before the anesthesia wears off with over the counter medications below for the first 4 days.

-Advil (Ibuprofen): 3 tablets (600mg) every 6 hrs, Alternatively Aleve (Naproxen): 1 tablet (220mg) every 12 hrs.

-Tylenol XS or PM (Acetaminophen) 2 tablets (1000mg) every 6 hrs. PM can be taken before bed to help you sleep. Tylenol can be taken with Advil or Aleve for extra pain control. Don't take Advil and Aleve at the same time.

Prescription narcotics (Vicodin or generic Norco) can be taken with Advil/Aleve, but not with Tylenol.

**Infection:** Take antibiotics as directed (3-5 days), on time, and until all tablets are gone as soon as possible the day of surgery to avoid severe infection. If you experience rash, or severe vomiting or diarrhea, please discontinue and call us immediately.

**Bleeding:** Oozing is normal for several days and overnight. Do not worry if blood clots are found in the morning. Do not overexert yourself. Do not rinse vigorously, or spit excessively, which causes more bleeding or dry socket. Use 30 min of firm pressure with gauze or a damp tea bag for heavy bleeding from the palate or a socket. No gauze around gum/bone grafts, or tooth transplants.

### Sutures (Stitches) or Dressing:

-We remove non-dissolving sutures (white or blue) in 2-3 weeks. Dissolving sutures (tan) fall off on their own at about 2 weeks. If they begin dangling, you can cut them with scissors cleaned with rubbing alcohol, but do not pull on them.

-With palatal gum grafting, a translucent purple adhesive dressing may be attached to the stitches on the roof of your mouth or around the graft itself, can feel rough to the tongue, and can fall off before your next appointment.

-With tooth uncovering or some gum grafts, a periodontal dressing (pink rubbery covering) may be attached to the tooth in the roof of the mouth or around the grafted teeth. Please call if it dislodges a day or two following surgery.

-Please avoid viewing or touching the surgical area. Grafted areas can change color ranging from red/brown to white.

**Implant or Sinus Procedure:** With lower jaw implants, if your lower lip is still numb the next morning, please immediately call us or Dr. Nicoara's cell after hours, to avoid permanent nerve damage. With a sinus procedure, it is possible to experience a single nose bleed immediately after, or up to 1 week after surgery. Do not to withhold a sneeze, blow your nose forcefully, perform strenuous activities, or bend forward excessively, which all creates extra sinus pressure and bleeding.

**Mouth Care:** Brush and floss all other areas of the mouth, but do not touch the surgical site to avoid dislodging sutures or blood clots. Start gentle rinsing 24 hours after surgery until sutures are removed with either salt water (1/2 tsp salt per cup of water) after every time you eat. Or with prescription Peridex rinse (chlorhexidine gluconate) used for one minute three times a day until your next visit. Get the automatic refill on the Peridex if you run out. You must wait 2 hours after brushing the rest of the teeth with toothpaste before using the Peridex (toothpaste will deactivate the Peridex), OR simply substitute the toothpaste with the Peridex by dipping your clean tooth brush in the Peridex and brush the non-surgical areas (DO NOT brush the surgical areas) then rinse the surgical area with the Peridex. Peridex may cause temporary, non-permanent staining of the teeth and tongue that disappears once you stop using it. Any persistent staining is removed at your next cleaning. If given a soft toothbrush, begin brushing in 2 weeks for 2 weeks.

**Partial Denture:** Leave your Essix tray in overnight for the first week to prevent swelling which will keep you from replacing it the next day. Do not force it in risking damage to the surgical area. Otherwise, an Essix or Flipper should NOT be worn overnight to prevent cavities or yeast infection. Remove the appliance to rinse your mouth and clean it with a toothbrush, especially after eating as food can get caught in it. Do not wear any appliance not provided by our office if we have not approved it.

**Nutrition:** An adequate diet improves healing. Eat cool foods for the first 48 hours, then warmer foods are fine. Avoid hard (nuts) or sticky (peanut butter) foods until sutures are removed. Cut food into small pieces and do not chew on the surgical site. Consider smoothies, yogurt, apple sauce, cottage cheese; soft chicken/ground beef; tuna/pasta/bean salads (think grocery store cold prepackaged foods); broth or soup (not hot initially); cooled mashed potatoes, oatmeal or scrambled eggs; food supplements (Carnation instant breakfast, Ensure, etc) ... and drink plenty of fluids. Do not use a straw (use a spoon), no popsicles or sucking ice, to avoid dislodging blood clots by sucking forcefully. Excessive alcohol can cause lack of surgical wound care.

**Smoking/Vaping:** Smoking will impede your healing and reduce success of your surgery. You should not smoke for at least 1 week prior to and after surgery. You may use a patch or some other nicotine replacement post-operatively, or try to quit altogether.

**Activity/Stress:** Be quiet for 48-72 hours after surgery. No heavy lifting, exercise, bending forward, or work that increases heart rate and blood flow causing further bleeding, swelling and pain. Stop activities causing throbbing, pain or bleeding. Reduce stress with good sleep and relaxing activities (meditation, reading, etc) to improve healing. Do not plan significant travel for at least the first 2 weeks after surgery, and be available for suture removal in 2-3 weeks.

If it is after hours, you can reach Dr. Nicoara at: **doctor@nicoaraperio.com**