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Post-Operative Instructions for Implant Treatment

Congratulations! You have finished a very important phase of your implant treatment, and now it is time to begin the healing process. It is important to understand that some discomfort, swelling, and bruising is normal. Every patient is different and there is no way of predicting if you will experience any of these symptoms. The medications that have been prescribed to you will help keep you comfortable for the next few days.

Please follow these instructions carefully when taking these medications:

Activity: You are advised to take things relatively easy for the next 24 hours and to keep your head and feet elevated. Do not do any strenuous activities such as running, heavy lifting, mowing the lawn, cleaning the house, etc., for at least 48 hours.

Please do not smoke or use tobacco in any form! The heat and chemicals from the smoke irritate the surgical area resulting in prolonged and more painful healing, and increases the risk for infection and possibly even implant failure.

Antibiotics/Pain Meds: Not all surgical procedures require antibiotics. If you are given an antibiotic prescription, be sure to take the antibiotic for the total number of days as directed on the prescription label. Please do not discontinue the antibiotic unless you suspect an adverse reaction (rash/itching), in which case, contact us immediately! It is also very important that you take the first pain tablet before the anesthetic wears off, then around the clock for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, take as needed to keep you comfortable. Always take medications with food or a glass of milk to decrease nausea/vomiting.

Oral Hygiene: Do not brush or floss the surgical area for the first 10-14 days! Brush all the rest of your teeth normally but stay away from the surgical area. A prescription mouthwash (Chlorhexidine) will be dispensed at your surgical appointment and should be swished very gently in the surgical area 2 times per day (directions are on the bottle). Do not eat or drink anything 30 minutes before or after using this mouthwash as it will decrease the effectiveness of the medication. You may begin lightly brushing the surgical area 10-14 days following the surgery with a very soft bristled toothbrush but do not floss or use an electric toothbrush until instructed. Also, you will be instructed on how to clean the surgical site at your evaluation appointment in 2-3 weeks.

Chewing/Pressure on the Jaw: It is very important that you do not put any unnecessary force on the implant surgery site for at least 2 weeks. Continue to be cautious for several weeks following your surgery. Chew the majority of your food on the opposite side of the surgery site, and do not eat any food that is hard, crunchy or has sharp edges or pieces, which can easily get lodged into or cut the surgery site while it is initially healing.

Swelling: Following your implant surgery, some swelling may be present. In a lot of cases, swelling does not present itself until 4-6 days post-surgery. It is a good idea to use an ice pack for the first 24 hours after surgery and then use moist heat such as a warm washcloth or a heating pad to control any swelling that may be present. If the swelling does not subside after 1 week following your surgery, please call our office.

Temporary Tooth/Teeth Replacements: You will need to follow the instructions given to you by our office regarding your temporary tooth/teeth replacements. You will go through an adjustment period where your temporary tooth and/or replacements may need to be adjusted or relined. The rule of thumb is the less you wear any type of replacement (such as a flipper, partial, or denture), especially during the first several

weeks of healing, the better chance you have of ideal healing with little to no complications. If no incision has been made (no sutures have been used), you may begin brushing the stainless steel healing cap the day of surgery. If the silver healing cap comes loose or comes completely off, please call us and bring the cap in right away so we can put it back on!

Antibiotic Mouthrinse: It is very important that you use the antibiotic mouthrinse that has been dispensed to you (Chlorhexidine), twice a day (once in the morning and once in the evening), until the whole bottle is gone. Using this mouthrinse as instructed will decrease bacteria and infection and promote optimum healing.

Bone Graft: If a bone graft was part of your procedure you may notice small particles, which may feel like sand in your mouth, for the next several days. This is okay; however, you must remember to use the prescribed mouthwash gently, and do not create any suction when spitting out. This will minimize the loss of extra bone particles.

Diet: It is very important for you to maintain a well-balanced diet during your healing period. You do not have to stay on a liquid diet. You may eat a variety of foods as long as you can chew them easily. Foods such as soup, mashed potatoes, cottage cheese, macaroni and cheese, yogurt, powdered protein supplement drinks, pudding, canned fruit, soft cooked vegetables, and easy to chew meat (in small pieces) should be tolerated well. The only foods to avoid are those with shells, husks, sharp edges, those that are spicy or those that take a lot of force to chew. Try to avoid chewing on the surgical side for at least the first week.

In the case of an emergency: If you experience any difficulty breathing, excessive bleeding or any symptoms that seem unusual, please do not hesitate to call. If for any reason you are unable to reach Harmony Dental Arts, and you feel your symptoms warrant a physician's attention, go to the hospital emergency room.

We are always happy to answer any questions or concerns you might have. Please feel free to call our office!

