



22605 SE 56<sup>th</sup> Street Ste. 110,  
Issaquah, WA 98029  
P: 425-369-1533 F: 425-369-1536

## HOME CARE FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

**GENERAL COMMENTS:** Our goal is to have your healing be as comfortable and smooth as possible. Proper home care is very important. Here are some general instructions to follow while you are healing. If you have any difficulties or concerns after your surgery, please do not hesitate to call or return to the office for follow-up. Our office phone is (425-369-1533). If it is after hours, there is an emergency number on the answering machine.

**Gauze:** If you leave the office with a gauze sponge in your mouth, you may discard it once you return home as long as bleeding has stopped, unless you have been instructed otherwise. **DO NOT** sleep with the gauze sponge in your mouth.

**Stitches:** Most stitches will dissolve in 7-10 days. If these sutures dissolve or fall out earlier don't be alarmed, as they only need to be in place for a few hours to be effective. ***For the graft sites, the stitches will need to be in place for 3 weeks in order to allow for adequate healing.***

**Diet:** We encourage you to drink fluids immediately following surgery and gradually begin eating softer foods as soon as possible. **DO NOT** use a straw for the first 2 weeks after surgery and avoid rice and brittle, crunchy or chewy foods for several days. A diet rich in protein-eggs, meats, cottage cheese-is desirable to promote healing. ***As a GRAFT patient you must be on a soft to liquid diet for 7 - 10 days, and then soft foods for another 3 weeks, eating on the opposite side of the graft site.***

**Activity:** *Sedation patients should not drive or become involved in activities that require judgment for 24 hours following surgery or be left unsupervised.* Over-exertion may start or intensify your pain-avoid excessive work or play. It is not necessary to remain indoors following uncomplicated surgery. However, rest and minimal activity after extensive or prolonged oral surgery will greatly minimize pain, swelling and bleeding.

**Swelling:** This is common after oral surgery and may last up to 7-10 days. Swelling may reach its peak 3 days after surgery, and even if it is severe it is ordinarily no cause for alarm.

To help control initial swelling, apply an ice bag to the side of your surgery continuously for 48hours after surgery. Alternating ice packs once melted. The more the ice is applied, the less swelling will develop (therefore, less pain). After 48 hours you can use a heat pack if needed - But **ONLY** after 48 hours of continuous icing.

**Skin Discoloration/Bruising:** The skin in the area of the surgery may become yellow, black and blue. This will gradually disappear within 10 - 21 days and requires no treatment.

**Smoking:** You should not smoke for 5-7 days after surgery. One cigarette will dramatically increase your pain and slow the healing process.

**Rinsing:** You may rinse every 4-6 hours for the next three days with mouthwash.

***IF YOU WERE GIVEN A SYRINGE IN YOUR TAKE HOME BAG - Please wait one week before using it.***

*It is to be used ONLY when food gets caught in the extraction area. Simply fill the syringe with water or mouthwash, and squirt the liquid in the surgical area.*

**Brushing:** Start gently brushing the teeth the first evening, using hot water to soften the toothbrush bristles. Tooth paste is generally O.K. Take special care to be gentle around the surgical areas.

**Blowing your nose:** It is important that patients who have had an upper graft or sinus lift procedure use caution when blowing their nose. **Please do not use a lot of force.** It is not uncommon to have some spotting of blood, nasal congestion, or nasal dripping. You can use OTC Afrin or Nasonex for relief.

**Bleeding:** Some oozing of blood is to be expected for about the first 24 hours. If bleeding is extensive or prolonged, the following procedure should be followed: After rinsing your mouth several times with cold water, use sterile gauze to wipe away all blood clots not in the tooth socket or in the surgical area. Then take one piece of folded gauze, place it over the bleeding area and apply **firm pressure** by biting down on it for at least **30 minutes**. If bleeding continues, repeat the process. Often a moistened **regular tea bag** wrapped in a single gauze placed over the surgery site and again apply firm biting pressure will quickly stop excessive bleeding. A quiet, upright position, the constant firm pressure of the gauze pack over the surgery area, and cold applied to the side of the face will control most bleeding. Blood clots in the mouth often appear grayish in color.

**Pain:** Some discomfort will be present for 7-14 days following the simplest surgery. Pain may be felt in the ear, sinus, under the lower jaw and in the temple region. Typically patients only require the prescription pain medicine for a few days, and can maintain comfort by continuing the use of the Ibuprofen.

**Note:** *It is important to understand that the Ibuprofen will reduce the amount of inflammation/swelling.*

*Inflammation/swelling is what causes majority of the pain associated with even the simplest oral surgery procedure. By taking the recommended dose of ibuprofen listed below, you can control the swelling, which in turn will reduce most of the pain you experience. \*Please know that by only taking the prescribed pain medication, WILL NOT control pain alone (i.e. Vicodin, Hydrocodone). The pain medication prescribed is to take in between the ibuprofen doses, as needed for pain.*

**Antibiotics:** If Dr. Clayhold has prescribed an antibiotic for your treatment, please fill the prescription prior to your appointment. Do not take any of the antibiotics before the appointment unless specifically instructed to do so.

**Medications:** Please follow the instructions for the CHECK-MARKED medications below.

*Note: You may not have been prescribed ALL of the medications below. So follow only the instructions for the medications check-marked for your specific needs following surgery.*

- **Ibuprofen - Pain & Swelling Medication** - Ibuprofen taken in a consistent and scheduled manner (800mg four times a day - breakfast, lunch, dinner, and bedtime) serves to decrease the inflammation which causes the pain. The Ibuprofen should be taken for 7 days, unless otherwise directed by Dr. Clayhold. **DO NOT** take Ibuprofen if you are on Coumadin or any other blood thinner medications.
- **Amoxicillin or Clindamycin -Antibiotic (Week 1)** - Take four times a day (breakfast, lunch, dinner, and bedtime) at the same time as the Ibuprofen until the antibiotic is gone.  
*NOTE: We advise taking the recommended Ibuprofen listed above and the prescribed (1<sup>st</sup> week) antibiotic together with food. Both medications can be sensitive to stomach, by taking them together with food or milk, you can decrease the chance of an upset stomach.*
- **Minocycline -Antibiotic (Week 2)** - Most patients who have a grafting procedure completed will have a second antibiotic to take. **This antibiotic should be started once the first round is completely finished and should be taken 2 times per day until completed.**
- **Vicodin ( i.e. Hydrocodone ) - Pain Medication** - If prescribed by Dr Clayhold, medication should be taken in between Ibuprofen doses as needed (45 - 60 minutes after the Ibuprofen). This medication often causes drowsiness, so do not take it if you are leaving your home-especially if you intend to drive a car. Also should not be taken sooner than every four hours and no more than 4 times a day. Refills of pain medications cannot be called in to pharmacies. Please call us during office hours.
- **Chlorhexidine rinse - Mouth Rinse** - This prescription rinse should be used twice a day until the sutures have dissolved. Allow the rinse to pool over the area without swishing. Swishing action can tear free the sutures.

**Reminders:**

The following items should cause **No Concern**:

- a. Slight oozing of blood for 24 hours
- b. Moderate discomfort controlled well by prescribed pain medication
- c. Discoloration of the skin next to the site of surgery
- d. A slight elevation of temperature during the first 24 hours after surgery
- e. Discoloration of the blood clot
- f. unpleasant breath odor or "bad taste" in the mouth
- g. Slight "metal" taste in mouth

The Office number (425-369-1533) should be called for any of the following:

- a. Profuse, uncontrollable bleeding
- b. Severe, uncontrollable pain
- c. A markedly elevated temperature
- d. Any generalized itching or skin eruption (i.e. hives, blotchiness on skin)
- e. Any situation which is not covered by these instructions or which you feel should be brought to our attention
- f. In case of an emergency, you may reach Dr Clayhold afterhours and weekends at 425-269-4244

**Please note that pain medications cannot be called in over the weekends. Please call during regular office hours Tuesday through Friday for any pain medication concerns or questions.**