



## Dr. Zachary Evans

### Surgical Post-Operative Instructions

#### ***Pain Control***

- The combination of ibuprofen and Tylenol is extremely effective at controlling post-surgical discomfort.
- Take Ibuprofen 600-800 mg (equal to 3-4 tabs) every 6 hours for the next 3-5 days. Do NOT exceed 2400 mg (12 tabs) in a 24-hour period.
- Take Regular or Extra Strength Tylenol (up to 1000 mg, equal to 2 tabs of over-the-counter Extra Strength) every 4-6 hours for the next 3-5 days unless you were given a prescription for a stronger pain killer like Tylenol 3, Norco/hydrocodone, or Percocet/oxycodone which also contains Tylenol. Do NOT exceed more than 4000 mg (or 8 Extra Strength tabs) of Tylenol in a 24-hour period. Please check with us and your pharmacy if you have any concerns about these medications.
- You may have been given a prescription for a stronger opioid pain reliever such as Norco, Hydrocodone, Tylenol #3, Percocet, Oxycodone, etc. Do NOT drive or operate heavy machinery while you are taking the opioid pain medication.

#### ***Swelling and Discomfort:***

Slight swelling of the operated area is not unusual and can peak 2-3 days after surgery. Bruising may also occur.

- Local anesthetic may last 2-8 hours. Be extremely careful while eating while you are numb.
- An ice bag wrapped in a soft towel may be gently applied to the affected area of the face. Alternating 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off will usually be adequate during the first 24 hours after surgery.
- Keeping your head elevated above your heart can decrease bleeding and swelling. Moist heat (towel with warm water) will help resolve minor swelling starting the day AFTER surgery. Report major swelling.
- You may experience some tooth sensitivity after surgery, especially to cold. Sensitivity usually decreases within several weeks and can be minimized by keeping the area clean. Notify us of extreme sensitivity.
- Stiffness of the jaw, slight earache, mild sore throat, or irritation at the corner of the mouth may result after surgery and should resolve in a week. Report if more significant.
- If discomfort and/or swelling increase in intensity after 4-5 days, please let us know.

#### ***Bleeding:***

- Minor bleeding, such as a pinkish tinge to your saliva, may occur during the first 48 hours following surgery. Avoid hot food/drink the day of surgery and DO NOT rinse out your mouth the day of surgery, as this may prolong the bleeding.
- **If bleeding continues, apply light pressure to the area with a moistened gauze or moistened tea bag. Keep in place continuously for 20-30 minutes to see if bleeding has stopped.**
- If further bleeding increases or occurs past the initial 48 hours, please call to receive further instructions. Avoid any strenuous physical activity for the next 2-3 days to prevent or minimize severe bleeding.

### ***Eating / Diet:***

- Follow a soft food diet and avoid the surgical area(s) when chewing. Chew on the opposite side and do NOT take bites of food with your front teeth if the procedure was done in that area.
- Avoid sticky, hard (such as ice cubes, nuts, popcorn, chips), brittle, spicy, highly seasoned, or acidic foods in your diet. Foods such as soups, pasta, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, macaroni & cheese, etc. are best (i.e. foods that are easy to cut with a fork). Maintain adequate nutrition and drink plenty of fluids.
- Do NOT use a drinking straw, as the suction may dislodge the blood clot.
- Avoid smoking if possible. Smoking is not advised during the 7-14 days before and after surgery as it can significantly increase the risk of complications.
- Avoid alcohol (even beer and wine) if possible until your post-operative appointment to reduce bleeding risks and to avoid reactions with your medications

### ***Homecare:***

- Brush and floss the areas of the mouth away from the surgical site normally, and completely avoid the surgery sites unless informed otherwise. In areas where there is dressing placed, lightly brush only the biting surfaces of the teeth.
- If you are instructed to wear a clear stent or an upper denture that covers up the roof of the mouth, wear it until the day after surgery. After that wear it as much as you would like for bleeding or discomfort.
- After you have eaten or you have snacked, please use lukewarm salt water rinse (1/2 teaspoon salt in 1 cup water) around 3-4 times a day; 30 seconds of gentle swishing with each use. Vigorous rinsing should be avoided. If given, use the Chlorhexidine rinse as instructed below.

**Starting day after surgery:** Please use Chlorhexidine rinse (Periogard, Peridex) if prescribed starting the day after surgery twice each day- once after breakfast and once before bed. Brush and floss the unaffected parts of the mouth normally, then very gently rinse and soak the surgical site for 30 seconds with the prescription mouthwash. As stated under “homecare” you can also gently rinse with warm salt water after eating beginning the day after surgery.

**Allergic Reaction:** If you notice hives, rashes, itching, or difficulty with breathing or swallowing after taking your medication, stop the medication and contact our office or your primary care physician immediately. If you have Benadryl handy, take one dose. If you have difficulty breathing, call 911.

**Stiches (sutures):** If dissolvable, your sutures will dissolve in 4-10 days. If nonresorbable sutures were used, you will need to return to have them removed. Avoid pulling at or cutting the sutures, even if they feel loose.

Be sure to keep your post-operative appointment to allow for removal of any dressings or sutures and to assess your healing, and so we can update your home care instructions.

Please feel free to call our office at any time if you have any questions concerning your treatment or medications.

**After Hours Emergency Number: (843) 696-8479**