



# SOUTHWEST

ORAL FACIAL & IMPLANT SURGERY

## **CARE FOLLOWING IMPLANT SURGERY**

Proper care of the mouth following most surgical procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area. Follow these guidelines to help make you more comfortable during the recovery process.

1. **Controlling Post-Operative Bleeding** – Following a surgical procedure it is normal to have post-operative bleeding. To stop the bleeding, maintain firm pressure by biting on the gauze pack that has been placed over the surgical area. Make sure the gauze is over the extraction/surgical site(s) and you are not biting on the gauze with your teeth. Keep constant firm pressure for 30-45 minutes. Change gauze pack as needed until the bleeding stops or gauze begins to come out light pink. Surgical site may ooze slightly for about 24 hours. If bright red bleeding continues after 4 hours, moisten a Lipton black tea bag, squeeze out excess water, and place tea bag directly over extraction site. Apply firm pressure for 45 minutes. **If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please give our office a call.**

2. **Swelling** – Expect the swelling to peak 48 to 72 hours following surgery. To help minimize swelling, keep your head elevated while resting. Apply an ice pack to the cheek/ face - 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off- for the first 24-72 hrs. Do not continue the ice packs beyond 72 hrs

**Healing - Do not rinse, brush or spit for 24 hours.** Do not use a straw or smoke for 3 days. After a surgical procedure, a blood clot forms in the surgical site. Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours following your procedure. This will reduce bleeding and help the clot to form properly. Avoid heavy lifting and physical activity for 5-7 days. Also, do not use over-the-counter mouthwash for 72 hours; the alcohol in the mouthwash can irritate the surgical site and slow the healing process. Resume brushing after 24 hours with a standard toothbrush. Be careful not to irritate the surgical site(s) with the toothbrush.

3. **Warm salt water rinses & Prescription mouth rinse use** - After 24 hours, mix ¼ tsp. salt with 4 oz. warm water. We recommended to rinse gently with the salt water by rotating your head from side to side and gently spit. Do this salt rinse 4-5 times a day, especially after meals. Continue salt water rinses for 7 days. **It is typical for Implant patients to receive a prescription for Peridex Oral Rinse, or Chlorhexidine.** If prescribed, begin your prescription rinse 24 hours after surgery. Swish for 30 seconds morning and night until your first scheduled follow up visit. Continue the salt water rinses throughout the day as previously explained.

4. **Discomfort and Pain Management** - Following surgical procedures, it is normal to experience soreness and swelling. For adults (12 years of age and older), we will prescribe 600mg Ibuprofen, unless medically contraindicated. Take (1) 600mg Ibuprofen **WITH** (1) Extra Strength Acetaminophen (Tylenol), every 6 hours for 3-4 days following surgery. This should reduce and likely eliminate the need for opioid pain medication. If an opioid pain medication is prescribed, it is recommended to only fill the prescription if you are not getting adequate pain relief. Otherwise, shred and dispose of the prescription.

Always take medications as prescribed. **DO NOT drive or operate any vehicle while taking narcotics until you are fully recovered from the effects of the medication as they may cause drowsiness and lack of awareness and coordination.** Many patients will also receive a prescription for an antibiotic. It is an important part of insuring you have the best healing process as possible. Completely finish any antibiotics if prescribed. However, if a fever or excessive swelling or rash is noticed, call our office.

**5. If you had IV anesthesia, you cannot drive a vehicle for 24 hours. Your escort should remain with you for the remainder of the day.**

**6. Eating** - Adequate food and fluid intake following surgery is highly important. We recommend a liquid diet for the first 24 hours (milkshakes, smoothies, Jello, pudding, yogurt, etc), then a soft diet for the following 3-4 days. If desired, you may supplement your diet with liquids such as Carnation Instant Breakfast which will provide you with proper nutrition. You should also avoid rice and other small particles that may irritate the surgical sites.

**7. Healing Abutments**- Implant patients may notice a flat "button" along your gum line- this is a healing abutment. Avoid the use of an electric toothbrush or turn it off in the abutment area. The high frequency vibration may loosen the abutment. If it comes out, it is not an emergency but please give our office a call the next business day so we can replace it for you if needed.

**8. Temporary prosthetics (Flipper/partial)** - If you have received a "Flipper" please remember the flipper should not be used for chewing. The purpose for a flipper is for aesthetics and to maintain space during the implant process. We suggest you remove your flipper at night, this allows your gum tissue to "breathe." This is also a good time to clean your flipper. Rinse with warm water and store flipper in a container with water.

**9. Sleep Apnea** - Patients who use a CPAP should continue the use of their CPAP whenever sleeping, and especially if using a prescription pain medication.

**10. Stitches** - If they were placed, they will normally dissolve or fall out within 7-10 days. Other types may need to be removed 2-3 weeks after your surgery. We will schedule as needed. It is important to keep your post-operative appointment to ensure proper healing.

**11. Follow up visits & rescheduling** -The implant process requires several months for proper healing. You will see your surgeon periodically during the healing period. We will schedule your appointments as needed and coordinate with your general dentist to make the implant process as smooth as possible for you.

**\*Do not hesitate to call if any questions arise\***

We hope these instructions will aid your healing from your surgical procedure. Our office telephone numbers are listed below for your convenience. If you are calling after hours, our answering service will take your call and then contact the doctors with the pertinent information for them to call you back.

**St. George: 435-673-1554 or Cedar City: 435-867-1474**

Thank you for choosing Southwest Oral Facial & Implant Surgery!  
Dr. Erik Nielsen D.D.S., M.D.    Dr. Matthew Mizukawa D.M.D.    Dr. John Mizukawa D.D.S.

[www.SouthwestOralSurgeons.com](http://www.SouthwestOralSurgeons.com)