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## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CARE FOLLOWING ORAL SURGICAL PROCEDURES

**Bleeding:** Some oozing of blood (for up to 24 hours) is normal, especially after multiple extractions or more extensive surgeries. In the event that you have recurrent bright red blood from the surgical site, use gauze or a tea bag (described below). If heavy bleeding continues past 24 hours, please call the office.

**Gauze Pack:** The oral gauze pack should be kept under firm pressure for 45 minutes or more. This protects the blood clot, which is forming at the extraction site. Interference with clot formation can result in extended post-operative discomfort and delayed healing. If bleeding continues after you have removed the gauze, use additional gauze from the packet given to you. Fold gauze in half, dampen it with water, then place directly over the spot that is bleeding and apply pressure by biting firmly for one (1) hour. Repeat as needed. A tea bag moistened with ice cold water may also be used for persistent bleeding.

**Restrictions:** Avoid strenuous oral activity such as **smoking, sucking spitting and straws for 24 to 48 hours** following tooth removal. Sleep with your head slightly elevated to decrease the possibility of additional bleeding.

**Diet:** You may eat after surgery, however, limit your diet to soft or liquid foods for several days. Refrain from consuming hot foods or drinks, sharp foods such as popcorn, potato chips or candy, which might injure the surgical site or make it difficult to keep you mouth clean. **Avoid alcohol, mouthwash and tobacco products as these substances significantly delay wound healing.** Return to you normal diet as instructed by your dentist.

**Medications: Take all medications as prescribed.** If you are given a prescription for medication to control pain, take as directed by the dentist. Some medications may slow an individual's reaction time, and activities such as driving or operating machinery should be avoided. **Alcoholic beverages should not be consumed while taking medication, and for at least one week following surgery.**

**IcePacks/Heat:** Some swelling is normal following tooth removal. Intermittent application of ice to the surgical area during the first 12 hours following surgery will help minimize swelling. An ice pack may be placed on the skin opposite the surgical site for 15 minutes per each ½ hour during waking hours. After 24 hours, begin applying heat to the side of the face if needed.

**Warm Rinses:** Begin using warm salt water rinses the day following dental surgery. A rinse is prepared by mixing one (1) teaspoon of salt in an eight (8) ounce glass of warm tap water. The water should taste slightly salty. Hold the solution around the extraction site after every meal and before bedtime for approximately one week following surgery.

**Brushing:** Resume brushing your teeth with a soft toothbrush the day after surgery, but do not brush in the surgical area. After brushing, gently clean stitches with a Q-Tip dipped in hydrogen peroxide.

**Stitches:** Your stitches (if you have them) usually dissolve on their own in 7 to 10 days.

**Dentist On-Call:** Please follow the instructions as indicated. If any abnormal or persistent symptoms are experienced, please contact this office. After office hours contact the dentist on-call at **610-526-0807**.