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Maxillofacial & Oral Surgeon

General Information for your Home Care Comfort

Following Removal of Erupted Teeth, Impacted Wisdom Teeth and other Oral Surgical Procedures

- If present, remove the gauze sponges that have been placed in your mouth one hour after surgery unless told otherwise. Place fresh ones as needed after soaking them in cold water.
- A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. It is often possible to control mild oozing by placing a folded, wet gauze pad over the wound. Bite down firmly and hold for 60 minutes. Sit upright and remain quite.
- If bleeding continues in spite of the above, dip a teabag in cold water and place this over the wound, biting firmly. It also helps to stop bleeding if you lie down, with your head raised on several pillows. Apply an ice bag or cold compress to the cheek. Do not become alarmed or excited. If unable to control excessive bleeding, call Dr. Botha.
- Upon reaching home, put an ice bag or cold towel to the face for the remainder of the day of surgery. Nibble on crushed ice or hold ice water in your mouth over the area of the surgery. Do this frequently; in other words, keep the area of surgery as cold as possible as this will help to reduce the amount of swelling which you are going to have. Continue for at least 24-48 hours.
- For any discomfort, use the prescription that has been given to you. Don't be afraid to use the medication as it is designed to make those first few days after surgery more comfortable to you. When taking the capsules or tablets, be sure to drink at least 150-250 ml of either water or milk. This will ensure rapid assimilation by the body and minimize the amount of irritation to the stomach itself. This irritation may cause nausea and vomiting, so drink enough liquids when taking oral medication.
- If you have been placed on antibiotics, please take all the tablets as directed. The drugs that you may have been placed on will help to minimize swelling, reduce discomfort, prevent infection, promote healing and aid in oral hygiene and wound cleanliness.
- Do very little rinsing until the following morning as rinsing may dislodge the blood clot and initiate bleeding. When rinsing, which you may begin the day

after surgery, use one of the following: 1) ½ teaspoon of table salt in 250 ml of warm water, 2) a mixture of one part of white vinegar with three parts of water. If you have been given a special prescription for a mouthwash, use that as directed instead of the above. Rinse frequently, at least 8 times a day. Avoid commercial mouthwashes as they contain alcohol, which may initiate bleeding and cause wound irritation.

- Drink plenty of fluids such as orange juices, tomato juice, ginger ale, water, tea, etc. Drink at least 8 glasses of liquids daily. Dehydration must be guarded against after oral surgery.
- Follow your own inclination as to diet, but for your own comfort stick to a soft liquid diet. Keep taking nourishment and try not to skip a meal. Begin by eating soft foods or liquids such as heavy soup, milk shakes, soft-boiled eggs, cereals, etc. As soon as possible, change to solid foods. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal diet and take your medication as usual.
- Clean your mouth thoroughly after each meal. Brush your teeth as best as you can. Cleanliness is a “must” for a rapid and uncomplicated recovery. Food left in the wounds retards healing and invites infection. Stitches often trap food and bacteria. Rinsing the mouth vigorously will help to keep the wounds clean.
- Although complications are rare, it can sometimes occur. Please report any unusual reaction to my staff or me. The same goes for any questions that you might have.

Good luck and we wish you a speedy recovery