



**Tri-Cities**  
DENTAL SPECIALISTS

## **CARE FOLLOWING DENTAL IMPLANT SURGERY**

### **After Placement of Dental Implants**

The placement of a dental implant can be very simple or may be complicated depending on the circumstances of your case. Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully. There may be a metal healing abutment protruding through the gingival (gum) tissue at the implant site. It should be cleaned just like a tooth. You must be careful not to chew on the implant during the entire healing phase until the tooth is placed on the implant.

### **Immediately following surgery:**

- Avoid vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the wound area following surgery. This may initiate bleeding by causing the blood clot that has formed to become dislodged.
- To minimize any swelling, place ice packs to the sides of your face where surgery was performed. Refer to the section on SWELLING for explanation.
- Take the prescribed pain medications as soon as you can so it is digested before the local anesthetic has worn off. Having something of substance in the stomach to coat the stomach will help minimize nausea from the pain medications. Refer to the section on PAIN for specific details.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. If you are active, your heart will be beating harder and you can expect excessive bleeding and throbbing from the wound.
- NO SMOKING UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

### **Bleeding:**

- Generally, there is much less bleeding with implants than tooth extractions because the implant fills the hole created in the bone. There is no open extraction site where a clot must form.
- Light bleeding for 24 hour is normal
- To minimize further bleeding, sit upright, do not be excited, sit quietly and minimize any physical exercise
- If bleeding persists, please call our office for further instructions.

**Swelling:**

- The swelling that is normally expected is usually proportional to the surgery involved. Placement of a dental implant generally does not produce much swelling so it may not be necessary to use ice at all.
- If there was a fair amount of cheek retraction involved with your implant procedure, then it would be appropriate to apply ice on the outside of the face on the affected side. The swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until 2-3 days post-operatively.
- The swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Sealed plastic bags filled with ice, ice packs, or a bag of frozen peas or corn wrapped in a washcloth should be applied to the side of the face where surgery was performed.
- The ice packs should be applied 20 minutes on/20 minutes off for the afternoon and evening immediately following your extraction. After 24 hours, ice has no beneficial effect.
- Thirty-six (36) hours following surgery the application of moist heat to the side of the face may help some in reducing the size of any swelling that has formed.
- If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. Soft, puffy swelling that you can indent with your finger after oral surgery is very normal.
- Bright red, rock hard, hot swelling that does not indent with finger pressure which is getting bigger by the hour would suggest infection. This usually would develop around day 3-4 after surgery when you would expect swelling to be going down, not up. If this should occur, please call our office at 604.939.8467.

**Temperature:**

- It is normal to run a low-grade temperature (99-100F) for 7-10 days following oral surgery. This reflects your immune response to the normal bacteria that are present in your mouth. A high temperature (>101F) might exist for 6-8 hours after surgery but no more than that.
- 2 Tylenol or 2-4 Ibuprofen 200mg tablets every 4-6 hours will help to moderate a temperature.
- A temperature >101F several days after surgery, especially if accompanied by rock hard swelling and increased pain, is usually indicative of infection. You should call the office for instructions if this should occur.

**Pain:**

- Pain or discomfort following surgery may last up to 4-5 days. For most patients, it seems they rely mainly on Tylenol or Ibuprofen by the second day.
- If prescription pain medications are required beyond 4 days, further treatment may be indicated. Please call the office and discuss your situation with us.
- Many medications for pain can cause nausea or vomiting. It is wise to have something of substance in the stomach (yogurt, ice cream, pudding or apple sauce) before taking prescription pain medicines and/or over the counter pain medicines (especially aspirin

or ibuprofen). Even coating the stomach with Pepto Bismol or Milk of Magnesia can help prevent or moderate nausea.

- For moderate pain, one or two tablets of Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol may be taken every three to four hours or Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) two-four 200 mg tablets may be taken every 3-4 hours.
- For severe pain take the tablets prescribed for pain as directed every 4 hours in addition to the Tylenol or Ibuprofen. The prescribed pain medicine will make you groggy and will slow down your reflexes.
  - Do not drive an automobile or work around or operate heavy machinery if you are taking prescription pain medicine.
  - Alcohol and prescription pain medicines do not mix!

#### **Antibiotics:**

- Be sure to take the prescribed antibiotics as directed until they are completely gone regardless of how good you may feel to help prevent infection.

#### **Diet:**

- Chew where your natural teeth are and not on the dental implant throughout the whole healing phase.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Try to drink 5-8 eight-ounce glasses of water the first day.
- Drink from a glass or cup and don't use a straw. The sucking motion will suck out the healing blood clot and start the bleeding again.
- Avoid hot liquids or food while you are numb so you don't burn yourself.
- Soft food and liquids can be eaten on the day of surgery.
- Return to a normal diet as soon as possible unless otherwise directed. You will find eating multiple small meals is easier than three regular meals for the first few days.
- You will feel better, have more strength, less discomfort and heal faster if you continue to eat.

#### **Oral Hygiene:**

- Good oral hygiene is essential to good healing.
- Brushing your teeth and the healing abutments is no problem. Be gentle initially with brushing the surgical areas but do not avoid them.
- Warm salt water rinses (teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) or plain water should be used at least 4-5 times a day especially after meals starting the day after surgery.
- In some cases, you will be instructed use the prescribed Perio Plus Oral Rinse before bed. The day after surgery, the Perio Plus should be used twice daily, after breakfast and before bed. Be sure to rinse for at least 30 seconds then gently spit it out.

**Smoking:**

- Smoking slows healing dramatically. Nicotine constricts blood vessels which slows the healing of surgery sites and affects the long-term health of the gum and bone.
- Smoking and dental implants do not mix. There is a documented increased failure rate of implants in patients who smoke. Therefore, the implant companies will not honor any of the replacement warranties on implants in patients who smoke.
- If you choose to smoke, you do so at the risk of losing your dental implants due to poor healing and increased gum disease in smokers.

**Activity:**

- You should keep physical activities to a minimum for 6-12 hours following surgery.
- If you are considering exercise, throbbing, or bleeding may occur. If this occurs, you should discontinue exercising.
- Keep in mind that you are probably not taking normal nourishment. This may weaken you and further limit your ability to exercise.

**Wearing your Prosthesis:**

- Partial dentures, flippers, or full dentures should not be used immediately after surgery.
- Your doctor will give you specific instructions at the time of surgery as to when you may wear your denture or flipper.
- In all cases you should remember that the prosthesis is for esthetics only and not for vigorous chewing. You want to minimize vigorous chewing of any kind on the healing cap or over the submerged implants during the entire healing phase.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please call  
our office at  
**604.939.8467**

If you are experiencing an emergency and it is after hours you may call your Dental Specialist on their emergency phone line listed below:

Emergency Numbers: Dr. Narani 604.728.4937  
Dr. Ballo 604.363.2897