

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY**

### **Local Anaesthetic**

The local anaesthetic will make you feel numb for at least a couple of hours. Beware not to eat or drink something hot as you will not be able to judge temperature and may scald yourself. Don't be tempted to chew or touch the numb area.

### **Eating**

You may eat and drink as normal, but you may choose to eat food that is easier to chew. A liquid diet is unnecessary but eating crunchy foods may be uncomfortable and disrupt the surgical site. You must avoid hot food and drink for the first day.

### **Surgical site**

The surgical site immediately forms a blood clot, which is the first phase of healing. It is vitally important that you do not dislodge this blood clot so that the healing is not disturbed. Therefore, do not rinse your mouth out or touch the area for the rest of the day in order to leave the blood clot in place. Brush your teeth as normal but be gentle near the surgical site. You may choose to dribble the water rather than spit it out forcefully.

### **Keeping the area clean**

From the following day after surgery, the blood clot should be more secure, so you should keep the area clean by rinsing gently with either lukewarm salty water or any mouthwash of your choice. The advised time to do this is after you eat any food in order to wash the debris from the area. We may advise you to use a specific mouthwash, but this is not normally necessary.

### **Bleeding**

A little oozing is not uncommon and is of no concern. Sleep with a towel over your pillow on the day of surgery in case you dribble a little blood. Your saliva may be stained pink from the blood clot. Don't be concerned by confusing this with actual bleeding. Profuse bleeding that gushes or fills your mouth is very unlikely and should be managed by tightly placing a tissue or the gauze provided and biting extremely hard on it for at least 20 minutes. Firm pressure almost always stops bleeding. If it doesn't, then you should contact us. Keep physical activity to a minimum as this may exacerbate the bleeding.

### **Stitches**

You may have had stitches in your gum. They dissolve. This may take up to 3 weeks.

### **Smoking**

Smoking delays healing and if this occurs, it is more likely that you could get an infection. Bone that does not heal may remain exposed, causing a painful area called a "dry socket". Infection and poor healing can be very painful so try your best not to smoke at least until the healing is complete in an attempt to prevent this.

Help with quitting smoking can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/nhs-stop-smoking-services-help-you-quit/>

## **Pain relief**

Surgery in the mouth may cause some discomfort afterwards in much the same way as you would expect after any other operation anywhere in the body. It is therefore advisable to take painkillers before the numbness wears off. The jawbone would heal in a similar way to your leg or arm or any other part of your body after an operation. Don't be surprised or concerned by this.

The discomfort should be managed by taking regular painkillers such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen, if your medical history allows it. If you are taking any medication, please confirm with the surgeon that routine painkillers are appropriate for you to take.

Ibuprofen reduces swelling as well as treating discomfort. Although these medications can be taken together, it is advisable to take them at different times for the effect to occur more frequently.

## **Teeth replacement**

Teeth that are being removed may not necessarily need replacing. You may find that you quickly adapt with the way you chew and look. If, however you are interested in replacing lost teeth, your dentist may discuss the options with you, which may include dentures, bridges, or implants.

Dental implants are titanium-based rods that are placed in your jawbone, upon which a tooth looking crown is attached, in order to have a fixed option to replace your lost tooth. Our surgeons are experts in this field of dentistry, so if dental implants interest you, please contact Oral Surgery Ltd and we would be happy to liaise with your dentist and assess if this form of treatment is appropriate for you.

## **Contact**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Oral Surgery Ltd, preferably by e-mail via [oral-surgery-ltd@dentallymail.co.uk](mailto:oral-surgery-ltd@dentallymail.co.uk) or alternatively by phone on 03301229382 during normal working hours. Should you experience severe pain, bleeding or swelling during evenings, weekends, or bank holidays, you should follow the out of hours instructions provided by your own dentist or call NHS 111 to access emergency advice and treatment. Oral Surgery Ltd does not provide out of hours care therefore any messages left with us will not be dealt with until the next working day.

## **Feedback**

We welcome feedback, suggestions and compliments at any time before, during and after your care.

## **Testimonials**

Patients often wish to be filmed for a brief video recording to inform other patients of their experience. If you would like to volunteer for a quick interview, it would be greatly appreciated, so please do let us know at any time. We do not use patients' names when filming.

## **Questions**

Please feel free to ask any questions at any stage.