



# SINUS LIFT POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling may be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully. Sometimes the after effects of surgery are quite minimal, so not all these instructions may apply. Follow these guidelines or call our office any time for clarification.

## Immediately Following Surgery:

- The gauze pad placed over the surgical area should be kept in place for 30 minutes and changed every 30 minutes until the bleeding subsides. Usually within 45 minutes to an hour, the bleeding will subside to a trickle.
- Vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the wound area immediately following surgery should be avoided. This may initiate bleeding. Gentle rinsing is encouraged BEGINNING THE NIGHT OF SURGERY. Use the Peridex (chlorhexidine 0.12%) that was prescribed. For further oral hygiene instructions, please review the section below entitled. Keep the mouth clean.
- **Do not under any circumstance blow your nose for the next 4 weeks.** This may be longer if indicated. You may sniff. NO BLOWING.
- **Try not to sneeze.** If you do have to sneeze, sneeze with your mouth open. This is also in effect for approximately 4 weeks. If you feel congested, take Sudafed or Dimetapp.
- Avoid playing wind instruments.
- Take the prescribed pain medications as soon as you begin to feel discomfort. This will usually coincide with the local anesthetic becoming diminished.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. It is not unusual to require 7 to 10 days before you are feeling back to normal, and before you can resume strenuous physical activity, and normal eating patterns.
- Place ice packs to the sides of your face where surgery was performed. Refer to the section on swelling for further explanation.

## Bleeding

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon up to 72 hours after surgery. The best way to stop bleeding is to fold 2 pieces of **damp** gauze over the extraction site and gently bite for 30-60 minutes making sure pressure is being applied to the extraction site. Rest quietly with your head elevated. If bleeding continues, use gauze for an additional 30 minutes. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for thirty minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels.

To minimize further bleeding, do not become excited, sit upright, and avoid exercise. Avoid bending over and lifting anything greater than 3 pounds. Smoking, forceful spitting, and use of a straw can cause the bleeding to start again. There is a possibility that you may develop bleeding from the nose. This is usually a temporary finding and will not persist past 3 or 4 days. If it does occur, stop your activity, sit in a chair with your head reclined and apply an ice pack. If it is uncontrolled or does **NOT** stop bleeding, call the doctor.

## **Swelling**

The swelling that is normally expected is usually proportional to the surgery involved. Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes, and sides of the face is not uncommon. This is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual repair. The swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until 2-3 days post-operatively. Swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Apply the ice packs to the sides of the face where surgery was performed. The ice packs should be used for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for the first 48 hours following surgery while awake. After the 48 hours, either ice or heat is permitted.

Drinking plenty of cold fluids with crushed ice is also advantageous. If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. This is a normal reaction to surgery. After 48 hours, applying moist heat to the sides of the face is beneficial in reducing the size of the swelling. Please note that it is important to keep your head elevated for 2-3 days following surgery to minimize swelling.

## **Pain**

For mild pain, one or two tablets of Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol may be taken every three to four hours. For moderate pain, take the Ibuprofen 800mg as prescribed. You should not take more than 2400 mg of ibuprofen in any one 24-hour period.

For severe pain, take the narcotic pain medication as directed. This prescribed pain medicine will make you groggy and will slow down your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages as they will enhance the effect of the narcotic. This is a dangerous combination.

Pain or discomfort following surgery should begin to subside after the first three or four days. If pain persists, it may require attention and you should call the office.

## **Diet**

While numb, patients should avoid hot liquids or foods. Patients may have applesauce, pudding, or Jell-O. Once numbness wears off patients can progress to solid foods, chewing away from the surgical sites.

Avoid foods such as nuts, popcorn, sunflower seeds and any other food where particles can get lodged underneath the tissue within the surgical site (such as pretzels, potato chips, corn chips) for 2 weeks.

## **Oral Hygiene**

The best way to prevent infection and ensure healing is to keep your mouth clean. Clean your mouth thoroughly after each meal beginning the day after surgery. Use a soft bristle toothbrush and toothpaste after meals and at bedtime. Should bleeding resume after brushing, repeat the use of gauze as described above. Do not rinse your mouth the day of surgery.

Chlorhexidine 0.12% mouth rinse will also be prescribed. This should be used in the morning when you wake up and at night before you go to bed. Rinse with chlorhexidine for 60 seconds and then spit it out. Chlorhexidine oral rinse should be used for at least 10 days. The use of a water flosser is generally avoided in the surgical area for several weeks.

## **Discoloration**

In some cases, discoloration of the skin follows swelling. The development of black, blue, green, or yellow discoloration is due to blood spreading beneath the tissues. In some patients, this is a normal occurrence, which may occur 2-3 days post-operatively. Moist heat applied to the area may speed up the removal of the discoloration. In younger patients, bruising is rare and sometimes is represented as a slight yellow discoloration. In older patients, especially the elderly, bruising can be quite significant and is represented as black and blue discoloration. This can cover a larger area sometimes even involving the neck and upper part of the chest. Bruising of this degree can take approximately two weeks to resolve.

## **Antibiotics**

If you have been placed on antibiotics, take the tablets or liquid as directed. Be sure to finish the entire prescription even if you feel that you're just fine. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction and notify the office of the reaction. Sometimes taking antibiotics with yogurt can help prevent diarrhea. If you take birth control pills, the birth control may become ineffective; use back up form of birth control.

## **Additional Information:**

- Slight elevation of temperature immediately following surgery is not uncommon. If the temperature persists, notify the office. Tylenol or ibuprofen should be taken to reduce the fever.
- If the corners of your mouth are stretched, they may dry and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with an ointment such as Vaseline.
- Sore throats and pain when swallowing are not uncommon. The muscles get swollen, and the normal act of swallowing can then become painful. This will subside in 2-3 days.
- Stiffness (trismus) of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening your mouth for a few days following surgery. In some patients, this is a normal post-operative event. Do not

force your mouth open. Massage the muscles and apply heat, and usually this will resolve in time.

- Sutures are placed in the area of surgery to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing.
- The pain and swelling should subside more and more each day following surgery. If your post-operative pain or swelling worsens or unusual symptoms occur call our office.
- Scuba diving and flying in pressurized aircraft may increase sinus pressure and should be avoided. Decongestants such as Drixoral, Dimetapp, or Sudafed will help reduce pressure in the sinuses. Avoid bearing down as when lifting heavy objects, blowing up balloons, playing musical instruments that require a blowing action or any other activity that increases nasal or oral pressure. These activities can be resumed 2-3 weeks after the surgery.
- **Smoking must be stopped.** We prefer you stop smoking far in advance to the surgery. Smoking decreases the success of the graft healing appropriately. It also decreases the success of dental implants if implants were placed at the same time.
- There may be a temporary loss of feeling in the gums in the operated area. The teeth can also feel loose for a time and be sensitive to hot and cold. In most cases, this is just a temporary effect.
- You will see the dentist in 1 week to check the surgical site. The dentist will also see you again in 3 to 4 months after the initial surgery to check the site and let you know at that time if you are ready for an implant. If you had an implant placed at the time of the sinus lift, then the dentist will check you in 1 month, then 3-4 months to check if the implant is ready to be restored.

**Emergency Phone Number (After Hours)**  
**(520) 825-8112**