

## **Our Post-Op Instructions**

*Designed with your comfort in mind.*

### **After Fillings:**

- When anesthetic has been used, your lips, teeth, and tongue may be numb for several hours after the appointment. Avoid any chewing until the numbness has completely worn off.
- It's normal to experience some hot, cold and pressure sensitivity after your appointment. Your gums may be sore for several days. Rinse three times a day with warm salt water (put a tsp of salt in a cup of warm water, rinse-swish-spit) to reduce pain and swelling.
- You may chew right away on white/composite fillings since they set completely on the day of your appointment. If your bite feels uneven, if you have persistent pain, or if you have any other questions or concerns, please call our office.

### **After Root Canal Therapy:**

- After your appointment when anesthetic has been used, your lips, teeth, and tongue may be numb for several hours after the appointment. Avoid any chewing until the numbness has completely worn off.
- It's normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a root canal appointment, especially when chewing. To control discomfort, take pain medication as recommended. To further reduce pain and swelling, rinse three times a day with warm salt water (a tsp of salt in a cup of warm water, rinse-swish-spit).
- If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them as prescribed, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone. To protect the tooth and help keep your temporary (if tooth is prepped for a crown after the root canal) in place, avoid eating all sticky foods (especially gum), hard foods, and if possible, chew only on the opposite side of your mouth. It's important to continue to brush and floss normally.
- Usually, the last step after root canal treatment is the placement of a crown on the tooth. A crown covers and protects the tooth from breaking in the future. If your bite feels uneven, if you have persistent swelling or pain, or if you have any other questions or concerns, please call our office.

### **After Crown and Bridge Appointments:**

- Crowns and bridges usually take two appointments. On the first appointment, the teeth are prepared. Then, temporary crowns or bridges are placed to protect the teeth while the custom restoration is being made. After each appointment when anesthetic has been used, your lips, teeth, and tongue may be numb for several hours after the appointment. Avoid any chewing until the numbness has completely worn off.
- On rare occasions, temporary crowns come off. Call us if this happens and keep the temporary so we can re-cement it. It is very important for the proper fit of your final restoration that temporaries stay in place.
- It's normal to experience some hot, cold, and pressure sensitivity after each appointment. Your gums may be sore for several days. Rinse three times a day with warm salt water (a tsp of salt in a cup of warm water, rinse-swish-spit) to reduce pain and swelling. Use medication only as directed.

- To help keep your temporary in place, avoid eating sticky foods (especially gum), hard foods, and if possible, chew only on the opposite side of your mouth. It's important to continue to brush normally, but floss very carefully and remove the floss from the side to prevent removal of the temporary crown.
- If your bite feels uneven in the area of your crown or bridge, if you have persistent pain, or you have any other questions or concerns, please call our office.

### **After Tooth Extraction:**

- Do not disturb the wound. Be sure to chew on the opposite side for 24 hours and keep anything sharp from entering the wound (i.e. eating utensils etc.).
- No smoking. Smoking will promote bleeding and interfere with healing.
- Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours after surgery. After, you may brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery.
- Avoid all rinsing (like mouthwash) for 24 hours after extraction. This is to insure the formation of a healing blood clot which is essential to proper wound healing. Disturbance of this clot can lead to increased bleeding or the loss of the blood clot. If the clot is lost, a painful condition called dry socket may occur. You may use warm salt water or mild antiseptic rinses after 24 hours only if prescribed.
- Do not use a straw. It can promote bleeding and may dislodge the blood clot causing a dry socket.
- When you leave the office, you will be given verbal instructions regarding the control of postoperative bleeding. A folded gauze pad will be placed on the extraction site and you will be asked to change this dressing every 30 minutes or so depending on the amount of bleeding that is occurring. We will also give you a package of gauze to take with you to use at home if the bleeding should continue. Should you need to use the gauze at home, remember to fold gauze in half and in half again to cover the wound. Hold firmly in place, by biting or with finger pressure, for about 30 minutes. If bleeding still continues, you may fold a tea bag in half and bite down on it. Tea contains Tannic Acid, a styptic, which may help to reduce the bleeding.
- Some discomfort is normal after surgery. Analgesic tablets (i.e Motrin, Tylenol etc.) may be taken under your dentist's direction. Prescription medication, which may have been given to you, should also be taken as directed. If pain continues, call your dentist.
- To prevent swelling, apply an ice pack or a cold towel to the outside of your face in the area of the extraction as much as needed the day of the procedure. Apply alternately, 30 minutes on then 30 minutes off, for an hour or longer if necessary.
- Eat normal regular meals as soon as you are able after surgery. Cold, soft food such as ice cream or yogurt may be the most comfortable for the first day. It is also important to drink plenty of fluids.

**Remember to call our office if anything seems unusual to you following an appointment.**