

Post- Operative Instructions Following Implant Placement

You should plan to take it easy for the rest of the day following implant surgery. If a sedative has been prescribed, you must arrange to be accompanied to and from your surgery appointment. In many cases, you will be able to resume your normal activities the following day. However, if more than one implant has been placed, you may wish to slow down your activity level for a couple of days. Heavy physical activity should be generally avoided for a few days, but otherwise, you may be ready to return to work one to two days after the surgery.

Some swelling and discomfort is to be expected following the surgery. Careful attention to the post-operative instructions will help minimize this.

Gentle pressure should be maintained over the area treated for the rest of the day of the surgery. Damp gauze is suitable for this purpose. Remember to keep your jaws tightly closed on this for at least 30-40 minutes every hour. Allow your jaw to rest for a few minutes between changes.

The use of ice on the face over the area of surgery is highly recommended for the rest of the day of surgery, and as needed on the following day. This will help to keep down any swelling. An effective ice pack can be made with a small package of frozen peas or corn.

A pain killer will be prescribed as needed after the surgery. It is generally better to take one tablet before the local anesthetic wears off, then use as needed for the next few days. Generally, if you can keep swelling to a minimum, as described above, the amount of pain will be surprisingly little.

In some cases, an antibiotic medication will be prescribed. If this is the case, please take this medication to completion according to the prescription instructions.

There is generally very little bleeding following implant surgery. Please maintain pressure on the damp gauze, which we have placed in your mouth, for at least an hour, and repeat as necessary through the day.

You may wish to use warm salt water (1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon table salt in 8 ounces warm water) as a mouth rinse, starting 48 hours after the surgery, to clean your mouth. Rinse gently without vigorous swishing 3 or 4 times a day. It is best if you avoid rinsing for the first 48 hours after surgery.

The implants have been placed in the bone, and the gum sutured over the area to completely cover the implants. It is very important to allow the gum to heal properly during the first two weeks after the surgery. The best way to help the gum heal is to avoid wearing a denture over the area of surgery and not to chew any food, which would disturb the healing.

After the first two weeks, you may have a denture modified with a soft liner, and then wear it sparingly for the rest of the healing period. Where a soft liner has been placed, you will need to return to have this checked at least once a month.

Softer foods are advised for the first two weeks after the implant surgery. In addition, you will be more comfortable if you avoid very spicy foods.

The sutures will generally be removed two weeks after the implant surgery. You must return to have this done, as they will not dissolve themselves.

If the gum appears to open up in any area, or if you develop a “gumboil” in the area of surgery, please make sure to come in as soon as possible. Please telephone us if you are unsure about whether a problem is occurring.

Smoking has a very negative effect on implant healing and success of implants. You should avoid smoking for at least the first two months after the implants have been placed. Better yet, please quit smoking. It will improve your prospects of long-term success.

Alcoholic beverages should be avoided for the first 72 hours after surgery, so as not to slow the initial healing process.

When in doubt, please use common sense. The implants will give you better service if the healing is undisturbed. The above steps will help in healing faster.

If you need after hours assistance, please call Dr. MacDonald at (403) 875-0464