



The Oral & Maxillofacial  
**SURGERY CENTER**  
of Santa Fe

## Post-Operative Instructions Dental Implants

### What to expect after implant(s) placement:

- Max pain/swelling occurs 2-3 days after surgery
- Soreness for 7-10 days
- Some bleeding for the first few hours and periodically tasting blood for first week
- Jaw tightness or stiffness, some soreness in temple, around ear and under jaw
- Soreness of adjacent teeth and structures
- Do not chew** on implants for 6 weeks following surgery
- Clean implant area as directed, Do not brush implant until directed to do so

### Care Instructions:

**Pain Management:** If you are able to take Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) and Tylenol (Acetaminophen), we recommend alternating medications. This maximizes pain relief. We recommend 400mg ibuprofen every 4 hours after you eat. Then, 2 hours after taking ibuprofen, take 500mg Tylenol (Acetaminophen). Continue alternating medications every 2 hours. At bedtime, we usually have you take Flexeril (cyclobenzaprine) to help reduce muscle clenching and grinding. This will make you drowsy, so take only at bedtime. Most people use for 1-2 nights. Most people are taking the ibuprofen and Tylenol for the first 3-5 days, but 1-2 weeks is not uncommon.

On occasion we will send in a prescription for a narcotic based pain medication. Use as directed. You may use the ibuprofen as directed in above paragraph, but **do not** take any additional Tylenol (Acetaminophen) since most of the prescribed pain medications contain this already.

**Antibiotics and other prescribed medication:** Use as directed. We usually have you continue the antibiotic for 3-5 days. You may discontinue the mouth rinse (Peridex/Chlorhexidine). Mouth rinse can be used to irrigate extraction sockets.

**Swelling:** Utilize ice pack provided for the first 24 hours. This can be re-frozen as needed. Apply to the skin on the outside of the areas. Alternating sides every 15 minutes. The use of heat after the first day is recommended. The gel pack provided can be used as a heat pack. Elevate head with extra pillows for first 24 hours (laying flat can worsen swelling for the first 24 hours). If an anti-inflammatory (Medrol dose pak) is prescribed, begin taking the day after surgery.

**Bleeding:** Oozing from the area is normal. Most of the time it resolves after a few hours (3-5 hours). Utilize the gauze provided. Moisten gauze with tap water so it is damp, fold and place in area. Close mouth on gauze to provide pressure. Do not use dry gauze, this will make it bleed more. If continued bleeding after a few hours, you can use moist black tea bags, covered in moist gauze and apply to area.

**Temporary Teeth:** Do not chew on temporary, even if it is attached. Removable temporaries can be used the day after surgery if discussed with surgeon. Do not sleep with these in your mouth. Temporary teeth are not for chewing. These are for smiling and cosmetic purposes. Sometimes a temporary tooth/teeth will be attached to the implant. Clean with antibiotic rinse/Q-Tip as directed below. Use tooth brush and tooth paste when instructed.

**Cleaning:** Do not brush mouth after surgery for the first 24 hours. This can cause bleeding or pain if the surgical areas are brushed. After 24 hours, may brush all other teeth, do not brush surgical sites for 3 weeks unless otherwise directed. Any tooth paste is fine, any soft bristle manual tooth brush is fine, electric/Sonicare brushes are fine. No water picks please (too strong) for 3 months to area. Starting the first day after surgery, rinse mouth out with warm tap water or salt water (1 teaspoon to 8 oz water). You may rinse as often as you want. Do not swish or gargle too strongly, this can irritate the area. Utilize the antibiotic mouth rinse (Peridex, Chlorohexidine) with a Q-Tip. Dip the Q-tip in rinse and swab the area 2-3 times a day. No food/drink for 30 minutes after swabbing implant area. Start the day after the implant is placed. After 3-5 weeks, the tissue is usually well healed and a tooth brush can be used to clean area. At this time, you may stop using mouth rinse with Q-Tip.

Do not use any mouth rinses containing alcohol (Listerine, Scope, etc.) This can irritate the surgical site and cause delays in healing.

**Exercise:** As tolerated the following day after surgery. Heavy lifting or strenuous exercise for first 3-5 days can result in more pain or bleeding.

**Smoking:** No smoking for at least 1 weeks. Smoking increases risk of implant failure, delayed healing and pain.

**Diet:** No chewing on surgical site for 3 months unless otherwise directed by your surgeon. You may eat after surgery. Chew on the opposite side of the placed implant. For the first 24 hours, warm or cool foods only. No hot temperatures. This can trigger more bleeding. We recommend soft foods the first week, foods that can either be directly swallowed or smashed with tongue or front teeth. This includes chicken, eggs, pastas, steamed veggies, baked fish, smoothies, shakes, soups, stews; anything that is very soft. After 1 week, advance to a normal diet as tolerated. Chewing on implant can damage the bone, leading to implant failure. We must let the bone heal for 3 months before it is strong enough to chew with. If only one side worked on, you may chew cautiously on the other side with normal foods. Just be careful. No chewing on surgical site for 3 months please.

**Sutures-** We will let you know if the sutures are dissolvable or not. Non-dissolving sutures will be removed as directed by the performing surgeon.

**Feel free to call us at (505)984-0694 for the office and after hours needs or questions.**