

**NORTH SUBURBAN  
PERIDONTICS, LTD.  
DAVID C. MCCLENAHAN, D.D.S.**

**POST SURGICAL  
INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION**

**The Post-Operative Phase**

The surgical phase of your periodontal treatment has been partially or totally completed. This information has been prepared to assist you in the next step in your treatment plan – a speedy recovery from surgery. With the proper home care, you will not only add to your comfort, but also hasten recovery and help minimize complications. By strictly adhering to the following guidelines, you will be contributing to the overall success of your periodontal treatment.

**Sutures and Periodontal Dressing**

For most surgeries, the sutures used are self-dissolving. This process will occur in two to five days. Any remaining sutures will be removed at your post-operative visit. If the sutures are non-resorbing, they will be removed one to two weeks after surgery.

If a periodontal dressing has been placed to protect the wound area, it will be come hardened in approximately one and one half hours. The loss of the dressing is not uncommon. If your mouth feels comfortable, it is safe to have the area “undressed” until your next appointment.

**Tooth Brushing and Rinsing**

You may lightly brush the teeth in the surgical area. However, be careful and avoid brushing directly on the sutures. Do not floss in the surgical area. Continue your standard home care procedures for the rest of the mouth.

The day after surgery, begin applying Listerine or Peridex as directed. Also, rinse with a solution of ½ teaspoon of salt in a 6 oz. glass of warm water six to eight times a day for one week. Please do not rinse vigorously.

**Diet and Fluids**

You may eat most foods you favor, but a semi-solid diet is advisable. Do not eat spicy foods, popcorn, or foods with small seeds. A good diet is essential to the healing process, so be sure to eat well-balanced meals. Nutritional supplements such as Ensure, Meritine, Nutrment, Sustical, or Carnation Instant Breakfast are HIGHLY recommended.

**Smoking and Alcohol**

Do not smoke following surgery since smoking is an **EXTREME** irritant to the healing tissue. Smoking also depletes the body of Vitamin C – a vitamin essential for healing. Smoking *greatly* retards the rate of healing and will **SIGNIFICANTLY** increase post-surgical discomfort and tooth sensitivity.

**Rest**

It is important to get plenty of rest following surgery. Avoid strenuous activity the first three days after the operation.

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The following information will help you identify and alleviate the possible complications associated with periodontal surgery:

### Bleeding

Slight bleeding may continue up to 24 hours after surgery. This slight bleeding or “oozing” of blood may be exaggerated when it dissolves in saliva. If active bleeding occurs, gently rinse the mouth to remove any blood clots. Determine the site of the bleeding and apply firm, steady pressure to the area with a moist gauze pad for 15-30 minutes. A teabag may be substituted for the gauze pad and may be more effective. Sitting quietly in an upright position will also aid in the control of bleeding. If these measures do not succeed, please call the office.

### Swelling

Some degree of swelling is to be expected following surgery. This swelling may take three to four days to reach its maximum. To minimize swelling you should:

1. The day of surgery, gently place an ice pack on the outside of the face approximating the surgical area. Apply for 20 minutes, then remove for twenty minutes. Continue this for as long as possible or until bedtime.
2. Sleep on two pillows with your head slightly raised. This should be done only on the first night after surgery.

### Fever

A slight fever is not uncommon for the first few days following surgery. If the fever is excessive or at all questionable, do not hesitate to call the office.

### Discomfort

As with any surgical procedure, some degree of discomfort is to be expected. Tooth tenderness and slight mobility may also occur. For relief of pain, have the prescription filled that was given to you and take the medication as directed. It is our sincere desire to have you as comfortable as possible during the recover period. If pain is excessive, please feel free to call the office at any time. You may also contact the doctor at his home number if necessary.

Again, these guidelines are intended to help promote as successful a periodontal procedure as possible. The recovery phase is a key element in the treatment plan. By following these guidelines, you will be making a positive contribution to your total recovery from periodontal surgery.

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