**Post-Operative Instructions Following a Sinus Lift**

**What Happens Immediately After Surgery?**

You should go straight home from our office and rest. Lie down in a comfortable position with your head elevated until you begin to feel the effects of the anesthesia wear off. You may feel drowsy.

Take the pain medication you have been prescribed as soon as you arrive home.

You will be given a gauze pad in order to stanch the blood flow from the surgical site. This pad needs to be held in place for 30 minutes with a gentle biting pressure. Try not to talk or move your jaws around so you don’t dislodge the gauze. After the 30 minutes have passed, you may take the gauze pad out of your mouth and throw it away. Feel free to repeat these steps as necessary until the bleeding stops.

Other things to avoid: spitting, drinking through a straw, and swishing fluids like mouth wash around in your mouth. These behaviours might dislodge the blood clot that has formed.

If you are experiencing swelling, place ice packs on the side of your face where the procedure took place.

Do not be concerned if you experience discomfort, bleeding, or swelling – these symptoms are all totally normal following this type of procedure.

**What Should I Do About…**

**Pain**

Take the pain medication prescribed to you within 2 hours of the completion of your surgery so that you are still under the influence of the local anaesthetic before the prescription pain medication kicks in.

We will also give you an anti-inflammatory medication. This drug should be taken every 6 hours without fail for the first 2-3 days after surgery, regardless of whether or not you’re feeling any pain or discomfort.

If your pain does continue, take the narcotic pain medicine at the same time that you take the anti-inflammatory to maximize the results.

Because narcotics dull your reflexes and make you groggy, you should not drive or operate any machinery while taking these medications.

Do not combine narcotics with alcohol.

Taking the prescription pain drug with soft food and/or fluids will help keep you from feeling nausea or having an upset stomach.

**Sinus Pressure**

For the first 10 days after your surgery, you must avoid all activities that might create pressure within your sinuses.

DO NOT blow your nose.

DO NOT smoke.

DO NOT drink through a straw.

Don’t fly in an aircraft or scuba dive.

If you have to sneeze, do so with your mouth open so that the pressure is expelled from your mouth along with the sneeze.

In the event of nasal discharge, stuffiness, or blood coming out of your nostrils, you may wipe your nose to clean the area up, but do NOT blow your nose.

**Nasal Decongestants**

Nasal decongestants are sometimes used to help alleviate discomfort and sinus pressure following a sinus graft surgery.

If we have given you instructions to take a nasal decongestant in order to relieve the feeling of having a “stuffy nose,” please follow the instructions and take the drug for the recommended amount of time.

**Smoking**

You should not, under any circumstances, smoke for the first 2 weeks after your surgery. Doing so puts the success of the entire surgery in jeopardy due to infections, complications, and even graft failure.

Cigarette smoke is extremely detrimental to the healing process. DO NOT SMOKE.

**Bone Slivers**

Sometimes, bone fragments can move from the surgical site and stick out of the gum tissue after the surgery. This is not a cause for alarm, though these bone slivers can be irritating.

Call our office if you experience this so we can help you out.

**Stitches**

Your stitches should dissolve on their own after a week or so. Don’t panic if they become dislodged sooner than that by food or cleaning. Call our office to schedule a follow up visit.

Gently rinse your mouth with warm saltwater on a regular basis during the recovery process to promote healing.

**Antibiotics**

When we prescribe antibiotics to prevent infection, it is critical that you take them for the entire length of time for which they were prescribed.

Some patients experience feelings of being itchy or nauseated when they first start taking antibiotics. This is normal and is not a reason to stop taking the antibiotic.

On the other hand, if you break out in a rash or have some other unusual symptom, please call our office so we can assist you. You may be experiencing an allergic reaction.

Patients who are currently taking an oral contraceptive should use an additional, alternative form of birth control for the remainder of the cycle as antibiotics interfere with the efficacy of birth control pills.

**Oral Hygiene**

Keeping your mouth clean is an integral part of the recovery process.

Do not rinse your mouth out until at least the day after the surgery.

If you must, you can brush your teeth the night after the surgery using a tiny amount of toothpaste or warm saltwater, but you must NOT spit while gently rinsing out your mouth.

The day after the surgery, you will need to begin a regimen of rinsing 5-6 times daily with a cup of warm saltwater (1 teaspoon of salt to 1 cup warm water). Do NOT use a commercial mouthwash, as these generally contain alcohol, which will impede recovery.

If you experience dry, cracked lips or corners of your mouth, apply some Vaseline to keep the area moist.

Swelling and bruising may occur. Use ice packs to diminish the swelling over the first couple of days. We recommend applying ice packs for 15 min followed by 10 min rest for 24 hours.

If you experience severe or persistent sinus or nasal congestion, please contact us.

If you experience an emergency, contact the practice. We will see you as soon as possible. If you call after hours, follow the instructions provided, and we will return your call as soon as possible. If your emergency is life threatening, call 111 or go to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.