PERIO SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

If you are reading this (and we hope you are) you have just completed a periodontal surgery. Extreme care has been taken to ensure success. It is now also up to you to aid in the best possible outcome. Please, please follow these rules/instructions as it can be the difference between success and failure. This likely won't be the favourite week or so of your life but with following these instructions your recovery will progress quicker and with less discomfort.

PAIN: In spite of being given pain meds prior to the start of your surgery, discomfort may begin to set in as the anesthesia wears off - this is normal. You may have been given additional prescriptions for pain and these medications should be started right away. Unless otherwise specified, take the Ibuprofen, 4 times/day (breakfast, lunch, dinner, bedtime) for the first 3 days, even if you are not experiencing pain or swelling. It is easier to prevent pain, than fight it once it sets in. After 3 days you may take the Ibuprofen as needed, up to a maximum of 4 times/day If you can't take Ibuprofen, you may have been prescribed an alternative such as Tylenol 3. Otherwise, Tylenol extra strength (2 tablets) every 6 hours is a good alternative and can even be taken **in addition** to the Ibuprofen if desired. There is no rule to how long pain lasts – for most it is 3-5 days whereas others have no pain or some may persist for a week or longer.

SWELLING may occur after the procedure and tends to peak at 3-5 days. It is not uncommon for increased swelling and discomfort several days following the surgery – this is the bodies attempt to heal. Placing an icepack over the treated area (exterior of the face) after the procedure can minimize swelling. 10 min on/off is recommended for the first 24hours. In some instances, bruising may occur, and may last 1-2 weeks before dissipating – this is a normal part of the healing process and occurs more frequently in those with fair skin.

BLEEDING: Small amounts of blood may discolor your saliva for the first few days. This is normal. The bleeding always appears more than it is due to mixing with your saliva – much like a drop of red food colouring turns a glass of water entirely pink. Do not spit or rinse your mouth vigorously to remove. If excessive bleeding occurs, apply gauze/tea bag over the area and press or bite firmly for at least 30min. Continue to repeat until the bleeding subsides.

HYGIENE: Avoid brushing/flossing in the area of the surgery for at least 2 weeks. Do not go anywhere near these regions – it is not a game to see how close you can get. We would rather some plaque buildup vs a brush traumatizing the area. Gentle rinsing can begin 2 days after your treatment: using salt water to rinse your mouth twice daily, or an alcohol-free mouth rinse, swishing gently and avoid spitting. You should brush the non-surgical involved teeth as you do normally as overall oral hygiene is paramount to success.

DIET: You should attempt to implement a soft diet for 2 weeks and favour the opposite side of the mouth. This does not mean you must restrict yourself to liquids – although many find it best to start this way. Items such as pasta/noodles, eggs, yogurts, tender meats, softer fish, mashed potato, oatmeal, smoothies are all great. The worst foods include those that are crispy and crunchy like chips, nuts and crackers or crusty breads. These tend to gouge into the area and may delay healing. The softer the food and the longer you are on that soft food – the quicker and better things will heal. As a helpful rule - if you can cut it with a fork its fine to eat.

EXERCISE: Try to avoid heavy lifting or vigorous exercise in the first 48hrs. Physical activity that raises the heart rate can result in increased blood pressure and initiate secondary bleeding. It is ok to go about your daily routine, take a walk but no classes.

STITCHES: Most sutures (stitches) used for your procedure are dissolving and can begin to loosen or break down as early as a couple days following the procedure. That said – it isn't a race to see how quickly you can eject them from your mouth. The tongue gets curious but you should NOT continuously flick the area with the hopes of wearing them down. The stitches have a job to do and it is actually a good thing when they are still present in certain areas for longer periods. Avoid pulling at them as they are attached to other areas and can cause pain/bleeding. If a suture is long and dangling you may attempt to snip it shorter if accessible, otherwise please refrain from playing with them. You may have also have a dressing/bandage placed which stays on for varying amounts Of time. If it comes off- it's ok, if it stays on until your return to see Dr Walton/Dr. Soll- this is also ok.

DRESSING/BANDAGES: If you had a gum graft performed – you may have a dressing/bandage placed on the palate to cover the wound. These dressings tend to fall off on their own and there is no correct date for this to happen – it may fall of the first evening or last for a couple of weeks – this is not a problem. Often when the dressing comes off the area which was previously comfortable may be sore due to being exposed for the first time – this is normal.

INFECTION: The chance of infection is very small. Pain does not mean infection. In the rare instance of infection – you are already on antibiotics – so please simply complete the course.

IMPLANT ABUTMENTS: If you had a dental implant there is a small component that looks like a tiny screw which can sometimes come lose and fall off – this is NOT the implant. Do not panic – this is not something that requires immediate care and can be inserted back at any time. Here are images of what the abutment can look like to help clarify:



Remember: **NO PULLING, NO PEEKING, NO POKING, NO TOUCHING, NO TONGUING** – please leave the area alone. Retracting the lips/cheek to take a photo is not a good idea.

In cases of extreme pain, swelling, or bleeding, please reach out to our office for follow up and guidance.