

## BIOPSY POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of Ann Arbor

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### INTRODUCTION

Postoperative care following oral biopsies are very important. Careful attention to the following instructions will help prevent complications, minimize discomfort, and promote proper healing.

### KEEP THE MOUTH CLEAN

Beginning 24 hours after the surgery, rinse gently, using a solution of ½ teaspoon of salt in an 8 ounce glass of warm water, 4 times a day until the area is healed. Tooth brushing can resume 24 hours after surgery. Avoid the area(s) of surgery, and use a soft toothbrush. As healing progresses, normal brushing techniques may be resumed.

### BLEEDING

Firm gauze pressure is the most effective way to control bleeding. When you leave the office you will most likely be biting on a moistened piece of gauze. The gauze should be left in place for at least 60 minutes or until the oozing stops before removing it. After 60 minutes, the gauze can be removed and the surgical site inspected. If oozing continues, replace the gauze with a fresh moistened piece. Be sure to place the moistened gauze properly over the site of bleeding. Leave the gauze in place, under steady pressure, undisturbed for approximately 45-60 minutes. Resting, with the head elevated on a couple of pillows is also helpful. It is not uncommon to require the use of gauze on and off throughout the day. **Remember to remove the gauze from the mouth when eating, drinking, or sleeping.** No smoking, spitting, sucking on straws or rinsing for 24 hours following your surgical procedure.

### PAIN

Some form of pain reliever should be taken before the numbness subsides. Dr. Fernandez will either recommend over the counter pain reliever or a written prescription. You should eat something (soup, yogurt, soft foods, etc.) prior to taking this medication so it does not upset your stomach. Prescription medications can make you groggy and may delay reflexes. Do not drive or operate machinery while on this medication. Do not consume any alcoholic beverages while taking pain medications.

Most discomfort from oral biopsies will be gone in a few days. If pain continues beyond the fourth postoperative day, it may require attention and you should call the office.

### SUTURES

Dissolvable sutures are placed. These sutures will come out on their own within two days to two weeks.

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## **SWELLING**

The swelling expected is usually proportional to the surgery involved. Swelling is part of the body's normal healing process. Usually, the swelling will not become noticeable until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until two to three days post-operatively. However, the swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. A plastic bag filled with ice, frozen peas/corn, or a gel pack should be applied to the side of the face where surgery was performed. The ice packs should be used at 30 minute intervals. Warm compress can be used by the third day at 30 minute intervals.

**Biopsy on your LIP:** Apply ice to area 30 minutes on, 30 minutes off up to 48 hours. It is not uncommon for the lip to swell in the first 72 hour period. Applying a lubricant to your lips will help to prevent cracking post operatively.

**Biopsy on your TONGUE:** It is difficult to ice inside your mouth — but we recommend ice chips, cold liquids to soothe the surgical site. It is not uncommon for the tongue to swell in the first 72 hour period.

## **DISCOLORATION**

You may develop bruising from the surgical procedure. This is due to a slight oozing of blood beneath the tissue and is of little significance. This is a normal postoperative occurrence and will resolve in a few days to a week.

## **DIET**

You may eat anything soft you wish by chewing in a nonsurgical area. A high calorie, high protein diet can help assist in healing. The following are some examples of soft nutritious foods such as boiled eggs, chopped meats, custards, Jell-O, pudding, thick soups, milk, milk shakes, pancakes, oatmeal, potatoes and pasta are examples of soft foods. Avoid hard, chewy, crunchy, or spicy foods during your healing process.

## **IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS**

If you are in doubt about anything, please contact the office during normal business hours. If you have any issues that cannot wait until normal business hours, you can call the office and the answering service will contact the doctor regarding your concerns.