

POST SURGICAL INSTRUCTIONS

The following is a list of common questions and answers regarding the best care for your tooth after root canal surgery. If you have any questions that are not answered below, please call us with any of your concerns. Thanks for choosing our office for your root canal treatment.

- Rest:** Plan to take three days off of work and your daily activities. After your surgical treatment, go directly home and rest as much as possible for the remainder of the day and the day after. Your discomfort is generally minimal after the first 12 hours. However, there are a wide range of healing patterns amongst individuals.
- Medications:** Continue taking your medications as prescribed.
 - ◆ **Antibiotic** – If you were prescribed antibiotics, continue to take them every six hours until gone.
 - ◆ **Pain Medications** – Continue taking your prescribed pain medication every four to six hours as needed for two to three days after surgery. If you were prescribed pain medication such as Vicodin or Tylenol #3, you can improve pain relief by alternating two tablets of the prescribed medication with 800mg of an anti-inflammatory (i.e. Advil, Aleve, Motrin or Ibuprofen.) For example, if you take the Ibuprofen now, you will take the prescribed medication three hours later. Three hours after you take the prescribed medication, you will take the Ibuprofen again. Therefore, you are taking a medication every three hours, but each medication only every six hours. Continue this as long as needed for pain. For the strongest over-the-counter pain relief, substitute 1000 mg of regular Tylenol for the pain medication.
- Ice:** The day of surgery, after the procedure, continue icing (15 minutes on, 15 minutes off) until you go to bed.
- Elevate:** When you lie down, keep your head elevated above your heart with an extra pillow for the first 48 hours.
- Do Not:** Raise your lip to look at the sutures. This may disrupt or tear the sutures.
- Smoking:** Refrain from smoking for the first 48 hours after surgery. If you have to smoke, place wet gauze over the surgery site while smoking.
- Eating:** Eat what is comfortable for you. Try to avoid eating brittle, crunchy foods as well as hard foods that require heavy pressure to chew.
- Brushing:** Avoid brushing the gums at the surgical site for the first 72 hours. You may brush directly on the teeth. By the third day, if it is not too uncomfortable, you may begin gentle brushing at the site. By a week after treatment, you should be able to brush as before. You may notice some slight gum bleeding as you get more aggressive, but this will lessen with time.

- ☑ **Mouth Rinses:** Do not rinse your mouth for the remainder of the day after your surgery. Begin rinsing the following day. There are two different mouth rinses that can be used to help keep the tissues at the surgery site clean.
 - ◆ Peridex - This mouth rinse may be prescribed for you. Use this rinse once in the morning of surgery before you come in for your appointment. The day after the treatment, begin rinsing twice a day or as prescribed.
 - ◆ Salt Water - Warm salt water may also be used to gently rinse your mouth after meals. (One teaspoon salt in a glass of warm water).
- ☑ **Discoloration and Bleeding:** It is normal to have some discoloration of the tissues around the surgical site. You may notice some slight bleeding at the surgery site after treatment. You may use the provided gauze to help clot this minor bleeding. Discoloration (bruising) of the skin/cheek under the jaw line may occur occasionally. This does not occur with every patient, but if it does, there is no concern.
- ☑ **Pain and Swelling:** Do not be alarmed if you develop swelling. Swelling is a normal occurrence caused by working with the tissues at the surgical site. It is important to understand that there is a wide range of healing patterns following a surgery. Some individuals have very little pain or swelling the next day. Other people can have much more intense pain and swelling for a couple of weeks. Regardless of where you fall on this scale, you can expect some tenderness in the area a week after the surgery because it takes time for the tissues to heal. It typically takes a couple of weeks for the gums to feel normal. It may take the tooth a couple of months to feel normal as your body fills in the bone around the tooth.
- ☑ **Sutures:** The sutures we placed may begin to fall out prior to your next appointment; they are designed to do that. However, if there are any sutures remaining at your follow-up appointment, we will remove them.
- ☑ **Call:** Do not hesitate to call the office if you have any questions about unusual bleeding or severe pain. In case of an emergency after normal business hours, you can reach the doctors by calling the office phone number and following the prompts.

Thank you for choosing the Center for Endodontic Care.

Please call us with any questions or concerns.