VALENTINE
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

# Patient Instructions:  After Exposure Surgery for Impacted Tooth

## If you had a Bracket and Chain attached:

If you had a bracket and chain attached to your impacted tooth during surgery, you should schedule an appointment with your orthodontist 1-3 weeks after surgery. If a bracket and chain was not placed on your impacted tooth, you do not need to see your orthodontist after surgery.

## Immediately Following Surgery:

- A gauze pad is sometimes used to help control bleeding after surgery. If you have a gauze pad in your mouth, keep your teeth together with firm constant pressure for one hour.
- • Avoid vigorous mouth rinsing and refrain from touching the wound area. These activities may initiate bleeding by dislodging the blood clot that naturally forms after surgery.
- Take pain medications as soon as you are able so they can take effect before the local anesthetic has worn off. Having something of substance in the stomach will help minimize any nausea caused by pain medications. Refer to the section on PAIN for specific details.
- Restrict your activities on the day of surgery. Normal activity may be resumed when you feel comfortable. If you are active, your heart rate may increase and you will likely experience excessive bleeding and throbbing from the wound.

## Bleeding:

- A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Blood will clot on dry skin in about 10 minutes. However, on a wet surface, like is found inside the mouth, it takes approximately 6-8 hours for blood to clot and for bleeding to subside. It is common to experience slight bleeding or oozing, which causes the saliva to appear red.

- Excessive bleeding may be controlled by GENTLY rinsing or wiping any old clots from your mouth, then placing a gauze pad over the area and biting firmly for 1 hour. Repeat as necessary.
- If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for 30 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels. This can be repeated several times.
- If bleeding does not subside after 6-8 hours, call the office for further instructions.

## Swelling:

- Exposure procedures generally do not produce much swelling, so it may not be necessary to use ice at all.
- The use of ice packs may minimize swelling. Sealed plastic bags filled with ice, ice packs, or a bag of frozen peas in a washcloth, can be applied to the side of the face where surgery was performed.
- Ice packs should be applied in intervals of 20 minutes on then 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours following your surgery. After 24 hours, ice has no beneficial effect.

## Pain:

- Pain or discomfort following surgery is expected to last 4-5 days. For many patients, it seems the third and fourth day may require more pain medicine than the first and second day. After the fourth day, pain should subside and decrease with each passing day.
- For moderate pain, one or two tablets of acetaminophen, (Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol) may be taken every three to four hours, or ibuprofen 400 mg (Motrin or Advil) may be taken every 4 hours.

## Oral Hygiene:

- Good oral hygiene is essential to proper healing of any oral surgery site.
- Do not brush your teeth, rinse or spit immediately after surgery.
- Beginning on the day after surgery, you should brush your teeth with toothpaste and rinse 2-3 times per day, especially after eating. Salt water makes an ideal rinse (mix 1 cup of warm water with 1 teaspoon of salt). Plain water may also be used for rinsing.