INSTRUCTIONS FOR CARE OF THE MOUTH FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

1. BLEEDING

Bite with firm pressure on the gauze pack(s) for 1 hour. To stop the bleeding the gauze pack(s) must be placed and held on the surgical site(s) while closing the teeth together. Extra gauze will be sent home with you. Change the gauze pack(s) every 30 minutes, only if necessary. If bleeding has not stopped after all gauze is used, bite on a clean moistened tea bag(s) for 30 minutes. A small amount of seepage may be normal for up to 18 hours. If the bleeding is not decreasing, telephone this office. Do not spit in the first 24 hours. Spitting causes bleeding. Please remove gauze when you eat or sleep.

2. MEDICATIONS

Have your prescription filled and start taking it before your numbness wears off. Follow the instructions on the prescription label. Try not to take the medication on an empty stomach. Any medication given for infection (antibiotic) or swelling (anti-inflammatory) should be taken until it is all gone. If you develop a rash or hives discontinue all medication and contact the office. If the narcotic pain medication is too strong for you, you can cut a pain killer in half and take one half of a pill for pain. As the pain diminishes, it is okay to start taking over-the-counter pain medication in place of the narcotic pain medication.

3. SWELLING

Apply an ice pack to the outside of your jaw immediately upon your return home, 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off. Please cover ice pack with a towel. Do not apply ice directly to face. Doing this for up to the first 48 hours will help to reduce swelling. The third day, moist heat applied to the jaw, 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off, should increase comfort and help keep swelling to a minimum. Swelling and/or pain may peak up to 3 to 5 days after surgery; this is normal. You may experience discomfort for 1 week or occasionally longer.

4. FOOD

You may eat upon your arrival at home and prior to taking your medication. A soft food diet, such as yogurt, soft breads, soup, with lots of liquids is recommended. Hard and hot foods should be avoided for the first 24 hours. Skipping meals will slow down the rate of healing. Do not use straws; sucking on straws will cause bleeding.

5. RINSING

Do not rinse for 24 hours after surgery. After that time period, you can brush your teeth and rinse gently with warm salt water (1/3 teaspoon salt in a large 8 oz. glass of warm water) 4 or 5 times per day. Hold solution in mouth 30 seconds to 1 minute each time. A mouthwash may also be used if necessary. It is important to keep your mouth clean. You must brush your teeth after every meal; brush gently in the area of the surgery.
6. Nausea
This may be caused by swallowing too much blood, taking medications on an empty stomach, or occasionally due to the surgery or anesthetic. If these are tolerated, crackers or bland foods may then be taken. Pepto-Bismol can also be taken according to the instructions on the label. If nausea still persists, contact this office.

7. Smoking
Do not smoke following surgery. It causes bleeding and slows down healing.

8. Activity
The day of surgery it is important to go home and rest. If an intravenous anesthetic has been used on the day of surgery you should not drive a motor vehicle. If you are taking pain medication you should not operate any machinery.

9. Dentures
If an immediate denture is placed, do not remove. The doctor will remove the denture the following day upon your visit to the office. Additional instructions will be given then.

10. Emergency Contact
If you have any questions feel free to give this office a call at 408.736.4332 (M-F 8am - 5pm). If it is after hours, the answering service will answer the telephone and contact the doctor. For emergencies after hours or on the weekends, please contact the doctor at 1.800.964.8668.