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### **POST OPERATIVE PROTOCOL FOR WISDOM TEETH**

**DIET:** Advance diet as tolerated, meaning you may begin eating and drinking as desired. Drink lots of fluids. Please **DO NOT USE STRAWS** for 5 days.

**GAUZE PACKS:** Gauze packs have been placed over the surgical sites. Continue to bite on the gauze for one hour. **DO NOT CHANGE** the gauze frequently as this may cause continued bleeding. After the first hour, remove the gauze packs. A small amount of oozing from the surgical area is normal, and may persist until bedtime that night. You have been given additional gauze and this can be changed every hour as needed.

**SUTURES:** If sutures were placed, they are resorbable and dissolve anywhere between 48 hours to 10 days after surgery.

**MOUTH RINSE:** If your surgeon has prescribed an antimicrobial mouth rinse, use it as directed.

**ANTIBIOTICS:** If your surgeon has prescribed an antibiotic course, finish the antibiotic until the course has been completed. **DO NOT** stop taking the antibiotic early.

**SWELLING:** Expect the swelling and discomfort to peak on post-operative days 2 and 3, then gradually improve over the next several days.

**ICE PACKS:** Apply ice packs directly to the outside of both cheeks. Ice is most useful to decrease swelling the first 48 hours following surgery. You may rotate use, 30 minutes on, 30 minutes off. Changing ice packs is not necessary at night while sleeping. Restart ice upon waking in the morning.

**ACTIVITY AFTER SURGERY:** Rest as soon as you get home. It may be helpful to keep your head slightly elevated for the first 24 hours (sleep on extra pillow if necessary.). Refrain from strenuous physical activity for 5 days.

**SMOKING:** Smoking impairs healing of the tissue at any stage of recovery, but smoking is **ABSOLUTELY CONTRAINDICATED FOR 7 DAYS FOLLOWING SURGERY.**

#### **DAY AFTER SURGERY CARE:**

- Continue to use ice packs
- Continue to rest and keep head elevated
- Begin rinsing with salt water 3-4 times a day to help with surgical site healing (salt water rinse can be made by using 1/2 teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water)
- Brush your teeth at least two times a day; it is important to keep your mouth clean

#### **THIRD DAY AFTER SURGERY AND BEYOND:**

- Discontinue ice packs 72 hours after surgery and begin using them for heat application to the jaw. There are instructions on the packs for how to warm in the microwave. This may be necessary for up to 7 days post operatively.
- Continue with salt water rinse until sutures dissolve
- Remember that the third day is usually the peak for swelling and discomfort
- It is normal to develop some bruising on the cheeks, chin, and/or neck that will resolve in several days