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Post-Op Instructions After Surgical Orthodontics (Exposure and Bracket)

1. PROTECTION OF THE BLOOD CLOT / SURGICAL SITE:

Slight bleeding after a tooth extraction is normal and may last for several hours. Bite on folded gauze directly over the bleeding area and replace as needed. If there is no active bleeding then leave the gauze out. Lay in a semi-reclined position. Avoid spitting, bending over, sucking through a straw, and rinsing for a minimum of 48 hours. No strenuous activity or smoking for 48 hours. The formation of a blood clot is important for healing.

2. RINSING / HYGIENE:

Rinsing may dislodge the blood clot and interrupt the normal process of healing if started too early. Carefully follow these steps in order to prevent any delays in healing.

- **Day 1 (Day of surgery - first 24 hours after surgery):** Do not rinse or brush your teeth, and do not spit.
- **Day 2 (24 - 48 hours after surgery):** Brush and floss your teeth as normal, 2 times per day, making sure to be gentle around the extraction sites. Begin gently rinsing (vigorous rinsing may dislodge the blood clot and interrupt the normal process of healing, so be gentle), 2 times per day with a Chlorhexidine rinse (i.e. once in the morning and once at night, after regular brushing and flossing). Use salt water rinses between doses of the Chlorhexidine rinse (i.e. once finished eating).
- **Day 3:** Same regiments as day 2, however begin rinsing more vigorously.
- **Day 4 - 30:** Same regiment as day 2, however now rinse with full force. a. Continue rinsing and cleaning in this manner for 30 days. (note: you can stop the chlorhexidine at day 7).

A clean mouth will heal faster.

3. SWELLING / FEVER:

A cool pack placed on the face will be beneficial to help control any swelling and bleeding. If extreme swelling or a temperature above 38.3°C occurs, contact Dr. Martyna's office.

4. PAIN:

Some discomfort is normal following oral surgery. If pain medication is prescribed, take only as directed. Often it is beneficial to take the medication after eating to help prevent nausea. *Do not drive while using narcotic pain medications.*

5. SMOKING / VAPING / ALCOHOL:

Do not smoke, vape, or drink alcohol for 48 hours following oral surgery. This may cause the disruption of healthy blood clot formation and increase in complications including dry socket, prolonged healing, wound breakdown and post-operative infections.

6. DIET:

No hot liquids, acidic foods or drinks for the first 24 hours. Eat something when you feel ready to. Cool liquids are best to start but avoid sucking through straws. Once the numbness from the local anesthetic starts to wear off, progress to a soft diet but avoid chewing in the area of the surgery.

7. SHARP BONY SOCKETS / DRY SOCKET:

You may feel hard, sharp areas on/around the surgical site. This is the hard bony wall, which originally supported the tooth. "Dry Socket" is a term usually describing an area where the blood clot has dissolved leaving an exposed bony area which is painful. A "Dry Socket" will usually heal on its own. Pain control is the main concern when this happens. Try using an anti-inflammatory medicine like ibuprofen in addition to the narcotic pain medicine prescribed.

8. NAUSEA:

Nausea is a normal side effect of narcotic pain medications. If you have severe nausea or vomiting you may need to stop the pain medications or take an additional anti-nausea medication. It is better for you to take the extra medication when you feel the first signs of nausea than to wait until you vomit.

9. SURGICAL PACKING:

Do not disturb the wound. If surgical packing was placed leave it alone. The pack helps to keep the tooth exposed. If it gets dislodged or falls out do not be alarmed just call to follow-up with the office.

10. FOLLOW-UP:

Make a follow-up appointment with your orthodontist within the first two weeks to one month after the procedure is completed.

11. MOLAR EXPOSURE:

If molars were exposed and bracketed it may take time for the tooth to obtain a healthy position. Be diligent and make sure to carefully clean the area until the site is healthy (this may take a year or two in some cases).