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Post-Op Instructions After TMJ Surgery (Arthroscopy)

1. SWELLING AND BRUISING:

Post-operative swelling and bruising should be expected for approximately two weeks. To reduce this condition, your head should be elevated and cold compresses should be applied for the first 48 hours. After 48 hours discontinue ice and start applying heat to the area. Use heat by applying one of the following: a heating pad, hot water bottle, or you can place uncooked rice in a sock and heat it in the microwave. Ice and heat should be applied in twenty minute intervals (off/on). Residual bruising may be noticeable for several weeks. If you experience severe swelling please contact your surgeon.

2. ACTIVITY:

Sit up or semi-recline. Elevate the head of your bed 30 degrees. No strenuous activity, straining or bending over for 72 hours. Increase activity as tolerated with no heavy exercise for one week.

3. FEVER:

If a temperature above 38.3 occurs contact our office.

4. PAIN:

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

5. POST-OP ANTIBIOTICS:

If prescribed antibiotics, take your antibiotic doses with food. If you have a sensitive stomach, consider taking a probiotic which contains *S. boulardii*, which can be purchased at most drug stores and health food stores

6. DIET / EATING:

Eat something as soon as you feel ready in order to keep your calorie intake up to ensure

healthy healing. A soft diet is key to help with your joints healing. **Do not chew** and **do not chew gum**. Your diet is to be soft (i.e. mashed potato consistency or softer). Start with cool liquids at first. Have some dietary supplements ready such as Carnation Instant Breakfast, Ensure, Sustical, Boost, etc. Eat with a spoon, a straw, or simply drink from a glass. Continue this soft diet until further instructions from your surgeon are given.

7. WASHING:

If you have incisions on the skin do not get the surgical site wet for 24 hours after surgery. Later you may let water run over the surgical site. Do not soak. You may shower, but do not let shower spray directly onto the surgical site. Gently clean the site with soap and water as needed.

8. WOUND CARE:

Use saline nasal spray at least four times a day to keep the nostrils clear. Use rinse as directed. Rinse with salt water and at least 3 times a day. Start rinsing gently then rinse more vigorously after 2 days. After 7 days you should rinse with full force. Brush teeth 3 times a day. Skin sutures on the face (if any) should be left open to air after the first few days. Use a small amount (very thin coat) of Polysporin to the facial wounds twice a day if applicable. If applicable, keep the hip wound covered with gauze, but remove this and gently clean once daily. If there is an increasing area of redness and itching then call your surgeon, as you may be developing an allergic reaction to the Polysporin. If non-dissolving sutures have been used, they will be removed in 2 weeks.

9. CLEANLINESS AND HEALING:

The incision will heal better if it is carefully kept clean during the healing period. Oral sutures dissolve in two weeks. Brush the teeth and gently rinse starting the next day after surgery. In the beginning don't swish the mouth rinse too hard. After one week start gently running your fingertip along the incisions to massage them.

10. 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 to take an additional anti-nausea medication. It is better for you to take the extra anti-nausea medication when you feel the first signs of nausea than to wait until you vomit.

11. BLEEDING:

Active bleeding can be controlled with some simple measures: keep head elevated; stay calm and relaxed; for nasal bleeding use Neo-Synephrine (phenylephrine) or Afrin (Oxymetazoline) nasal spray; and be patient.

12. SMOKING / VAPING / ALCOHOL:

Do not smoke, vape or drink alcohol for a minimum of 48 hours following surgery as it may cause a disruption in healing and an increase in complications such as wound breakdown and post-operative infections.

13. SLEEPING:

Be careful not to put pressure on the area during sleep, since the changes in position of the bones need time to heal before they will be stable.

14. FACIAL EXERCISES:

Especially when having upper jaw surgery the muscles of facial expression will not work well and a lot of swelling will accumulate in the upper lip. Do smiling exercises three times a day after the surgery.

15. IBUPROFEN / NAPROXEN:

Ibuprofen is the active ingredient in Motrin/Advil and is an anti-inflammatory drug. It would be beneficial to start taking some anti-inflammatories as necessary for pain/swelling, unless you have any of the following: gastritis, stomach ulcers, are on Coumadin/Warfarin, or are instructed otherwise. If prescribed Naproxen, take this twice daily, as per bottle instructions. This will help with inflammation and general pain control.

16. TMJ SPLINT (if applicable):

Start wearing your splint as soon as you are able. It is not uncommon for the splint to feel uneven due to some swelling in the joint. If this persists for over a week you will need to have your splint adjusted.

17. JOINT FUNCTION:

Most patients have increased range of motion after a short healing period. However, it is not uncommon to have limited opening, as well as increased noise in the joints after surgery; this is due to the dissolution of scar bands which have formed in the joint and is usually resolved with time.