

TMJ SURGERY POSTOPERATIVE ORDERS

AFTER YOU LEAVE:

1. About your medications:

- ** Take all your medicine as directed. If you feel it is not helping, call your doctor. Do not quit taking it unless instructed or you have a reaction.
- ** Keep track of what medications you are taking and when you are taking them.
- ** If you are taking antibiotics, take them until they are all gone, even if you feel better.
- ** If you are taking medications, which make you drowsy, do not drive or use heavy machinery.

2. Follow-up appointment.

- ** If you have not been given a follow-up appointment, please call the appointment desk at 916-941-9860.

3. DO - Post operative instructions:

- ** Ice the surgical area for the first twenty four to forty eight hours after surgery. Place it on the surgical area for 15 to 20 minutes every hour, as you need it. Place the ice in a plastic bag and cover it with a towel. Do not sleep with the ice pack in place. Ice helps with the swelling and bruising.
- ** After the first twenty-four hours you can place moist heat to the surgical area. Remember your face is numb; do not place excessively hot or cold items directly on your skin!
- ** You can use a cool mist humidifier to help you breath easier.
- ** Sleep with your head elevated on 3 to 4 pillows.
- ** Shower as usual.
- ** Be very careful shaving your face since areas are numb.

4. Postoperative diet

- ** You are on a soft diet with light chewing and slowly advance to a regular diet with chewing.
- ** Eat several times a day. Postoperative healing depends on good nutrition.
- DO NOT ATTEMPT A WEIGHT LOSS PLAN. Vitamins are encouraged.

5. DO NOT

- ** DO NOT blow your nose for 1 week.
- ** DO NOT lift anything heavy or do strong exercise until your doctor says it is okay.

6. CALL 916-941-9860 if

- ** You develop problems.
- ** Bleeding is bright cherry red and is more than when you went home.
- ** You have any concerns about your surgical procedure or healing process.
- ** You have difficulty breathing.
- ** You have a reaction to your medications.
- ** You have a sudden increase in your temperature.
- ** You have a sudden increase in facial swelling.

Postoperative Instructions

You have just undergone temporomandibular joint surgery. This handout is designed to explain your postoperative course, limitations and what to expect.

Dressing is over your ear. This should remain in place for two to three days following your surgery.

A small amount of blood may be noted on the dressing. This is Normal. The dressing can be removed after day three.

You should not experience any bleeding after removing the dressing. If you do experience bleeding, apply pressure with your thumb for ten minutes. If this fails to stop the bleeding, please call the office @ 916-941-9860 during regular office hours.

You can expect some bruising and swelling in the surgical site. Application of ice for the first few hours is helpful.

You will be sent home with an anti-inflammatory and pain medication. It is important that you take the anti-inflammatory medication as instructed. The pain medication needs only to be taken as necessary.

For six weeks following surgery, your diet should consist of a soft diet as chewing may disrupt the joint and can cause problems.

The diet does not need to be limited to liquids, but the consistency should be that of cottage cheese, pasta, egg salad, and other soft foods that do not require heavy chewing.

You should begin jaw exercises on the third day following your surgery. These are stretching exercises to reduce stiffness in the joint associated with the surgery. This should be performed several times a day.

Careful stretching and gentle range-of-motion exercises are very important in your recovery. You should open your jaw as wide as you can and hold it in place. The first week, you should be able to open enough to get two fingers in between your upper and lower teeth.

By the second week after surgery, you should be opening wide enough to fit three fingers between your upper and lower teeth. This can be achieved by gentle stretching of the jaw with your fingers, or by using the tongue blades you were given.

If you wore a splint before your surgery, you may place the splint back in your mouth the third day following surgery. You may continue to wear the splint as you had before the surgery.

Dr. Liberty