**POST-OPERATIVE CARE**

*The Day of Surgery*

* **Bleeding:** If given gauze, change it every 45 minutes until active bleeding has subsided (usually 2-3 hours). Apply pressure to the gauze. It is normal to experience light bleeding for up to 24 hours.
* **Diet:** A soft bland diet is suggested for the first 3-5 days: soups, pudding, eggs, oatmeal, grits, etc. It is important to maintain an adequate intake of fluids( 6-8 large glasses of water or juice daily.)
* **Swelling:** Ice packs may be used to reduce swelling for the first 24 hours. Use 20 minute on/off technique.
* **Driving:** If sedated do not drive for 24 hours following surgery.
* **Do not spit/rinse:** your mouth for the first 24 hours**. Do not** use a straw for one week.
* **Smoking/Alcohol:** Avoid alcohol or tobacco for a week following surgery.
* **Numbness:** You will probably remain numb for several hours after surgery.
* **Medications:** Use all medications as directed on label:
* **Pain medicine:** should be taken as needed. You may take over the counter ibuprofen 200mg (2-4 tablets every 6 hours) in addition to or instead of your prescription pain medication.
* **Antibiotic:** should be taken as directed until gone.

*The First Day after Surgery*

* **Hygiene:** Return to your normal brushing routine, being very careful around sites.
* **Begin using a warm salt-water rinse every 2-3 hours until sites healed.**

*The Following Days after Surgery*

* **Swelling, Jaw Stiffness:** Apply warm moist heat to cheek area using 20 minute on/off technique
* **Sutures/Stitches:** You may have sutures placed in your mouth. They will dissolve within 7-10 days.
* Return to a normal diet as tolerated.

*Excessive Bleeding*

* Rinse mouth with cool water and gently wipe away blood clots with gauze.
* Take tea bags moistened with water and place over bleeding area applying pressure.
* Remain quiet and in a sitting position for 20-30 minutes. Repeat as needed.

*Other Complications:*

* **Stiffness:** Stiffness of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening. This will resolve in 7-10 days.
* **Earache, Headache, or Sore Throat:** you may experience any or all of these conditions. This is a temporary condition known as referred pain and will subside within a few days.
* **Bone Fragments:** Occasionally, small sharp fragments of bone may work through the gum tissue during the healing process. The process of “shedding” slivers of bone may last from one to four months.
* **Numbness:** Numbness of the lip, ,chin, and/ or tongue may develop. Again, this is usually a temporary condition that will correct itself.

***Please contact the office immediately if a change in your recovery occurs***

**Office Hours: 704-549-8020**

**After Hours: 704-619-9237**