

After Dental Implant Surgery

Please review our General Post-Operative instructions in addition to the following information that applies when dental implants have been placed to replace missing natural teeth.

Do not disturb the wound. Avoid rinsing, spitting, or touching the wound on the day of surgery. There will often be a metal healing abutment protruding through the gingival (gum) tissue.

Diet

Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid hot liquids or food. Soft food and liquids should be eaten on the day of surgery. Return to a normal diet as soon as possible unless otherwise directed. Try to avoid chewing directly on the area or areas where the implant was placed until at least your post-operative appointment.

Antibiotics

Be sure to take the prescribed antibiotics as directed to help prevent infection

Oral Hygiene

Do not rinse or spit on the day of your surgery. This tends to disturb the blood clot, open the wound and can prolong bleeding and slow healing. You should not have a significant amount of blood in your mouth. Saliva can be swallowed, even if slightly blood tinged.

Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential to reduce the risk of infection. Start salt water rinses the day following your procedure. Use one-half teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and gently rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat as often as you like, but at least four to five times daily and always after eating for the next five days.

Do not brush the teeth in the area of surgery for 48 hours. When brushing, be very gentle. When expectorating, also be gentle.

We may prescribe an antibiotic rinse (Chlorhexadine, Periogard, Peridex) for certain procedures. This rinse should be used in the morning and at bedtime after routine mouth care. Do not eat or drink or rinse your mouth after using the medicated rinse. Using this rinse more than two times a day will cause staining of your teeth.

Smoking

DO NOT SMOKE for at least two weeks following surgery. As discussed at your consultation, smoking dramatically increases the risk of implant failure. Dr. Bailey can prescribe a Nicoderm patch if you feel you need it.

Wearing your Prosthesis or Nightguards

Partial dentures, flippers, or full dentures should not be used immediately after surgery until your post-operative appointment unless specifically instructed otherwise. Please contact the office if there is any question. If you have a temporary “flipper” to wear do not place it until the numbness in the area is gone. When it is placed it should not touch the gums in the area of the surgery. If it does, this can cause ulceration of the wound edges and breakdown of the suture margins. If you have questions about the fit of your flipper, partial or complete denture, do not wear it until your general dentist or our office can see you.

Other Post-operative Considerations

You will notice that you cannot see the actual implants in your mouth as the gums cover the area. This is good. Do not stretch your lip daily to inspect the area. This can cause wound breakdown. In many instances a healing cap or abutment was placed over the implant. This will look silver and will be emerging through the gums. Again, do not stretch your lip daily to inspect the area. This can cause wound breakdown. Be very cautious not to eat or chew on these temporary implant covers as it will place undue movement on the implants below and can cause implant failure.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office. Please try to call during office hours; however a 24-hour answering service is available for after hours contact with a doctor. The after hours telephone number is (540) 710-8880.