

POST SURGICAL (Apico) TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS

We hope your visit in our office was pleasant and exceeded all expectations. Saving your tooth was a wise decision that you will benefit from every day. We strive to prove that root canal therapy is comfortable, valuable and dramatically better than the alternative of extraction and artificial tooth replacement. Thank you for your patronage and we appreciate your referrals.

It is recommended that you limit your physical activity the first 24 hours. This helps prevent bleeding problems from the surgical area. However, some bleeding may be expected for 24 hours. You may want to cover your pillowcase with a towel, or use an older pillowcase.

To minimize swelling, use ice packs intermittently, 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off, until bedtime if possible. Swelling is normal and may take up to a week to resolve. Sometimes it may increase and peak as late as 3 or 4 days following surgery. The surgical area may be uncomfortable for several days. Tenderness should decrease slowly as the area heals and may remain evident for several months as deep bony healing progresses. Anti-inflammatory drugs are highly recommended, including:

Anti-inflammatory Drugs

Ibuprofen: (Advil, Nuprin, Motrin): 600 to 800 mg every 6 to 8 hours **OR**
Aleve or generic over the counter naproxen sodium: Two 220 mg tablets every 6 to 8 hours.
Dexamethasone: By prescription if indicated

Other Pain Drugs

Acetaminophen: (Tylenol – regular or extra strength) **can be taken with or between** your anti-inflammatory doses for extra relief without drowsiness.

If a narcotic (_____) prescription pain reliever was prescribed and is needed, it should be **substituted for the acetaminophen with or between your anti-inflammatory doses**. That combination will provide the greatest pain control possible but narcotics cause drowsiness and caution is advised if driving is anticipated. Also, taking these with food or following a meal will avoid the nausea they sometimes cause.

Be sure to take any prescribed antibiotics as directed. **Once your symptoms or swelling resolve, discontinue taking the antibiotics.** If you are taking birth control pills and antibiotics, an additional method of birth control is recommended through the completion of the cycle, as the antibiotic may inactivate the birth control pills. Call us or your pharmacist if unusual side effects are noted.

The second and third day after surgery, rinse after meals with warm water (salt optional). Keep all other areas brushed and flossed as usual. Begin gentle brushing of the surgical area on day three, using your soft Mylar bristled toothbrush. Resume full mouth regular brushing and flossing after one week. Do not lift your lip to examine the stitches, as this may cause them to tear. However, early loss of a dissolving suture or two is not cause for concern.

Follow a soft diet the day of and day after your surgery. After that time, cut food into small pieces. No toast. Soft nourishing foods are excellent. Examples include juices, pureed vegetables, soups, gelatin, ice cream, yogurt and applesauce. Drink plenty of liquids.

Smoking during the first week after your surgery will increase the risk of infection and hinder the healing process.

All patients are given their endodontist's home phone number along with our office number after treatment. If you have any after-hours questions, call your endodontist at home first, and if they are not available, call our office number. Our voice mail will notify one of our doctors to contact you promptly.