Care of the mouth after surgery has an important effect on healing. Swelling, discomfort, and restricted jaw function are expected, so need not cause alarm. These may be minimized by the following instructions - please read them carefully:

- **Bleeding control**
  - Keep gauze packing over extraction site and bite down to apply firm pressure to help stop the bleeding
  - Change the gauze approximately every 30 minutes until the bleeding stops (usually 1-2 hours)
  - Remove gauze once the bleeding stops, or when eating, drinking or sleeping
  - If the site begins bleeding again, pack gauze and apply firm pressure again for 30 mins at a time until it stops

- **Prescriptions**
  - Antibiotics are not usually necessary for routine oral surgery, but if they have been prescribed for you, continue to take them until finished
  - If you have been prescribed pain medication, take it only as prescribed and only as long as necessary to alleviate the pain (don’t need to finish the bottle)
  - If you have been prescribed pain medication with narcotic (Tylenol #3, codeine, percocet, tramadol etc.), do not drive after taking these medications, and discard the remainder of the pills once you no longer need them
  - If you haven’t been prescribed pain medication, take over the counter pain medications like ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or Tylenol as needed
  - If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue the medication and contact this office immediately

- **Swelling control**
  - Swelling and bruising is normal and may continue to reach its peak at 48-72 hours after surgery
  - Swelling and bruising can last 7-10 days, sometimes longer depending on your surgery, and may extend from the eyes to the collarbones
  - Apply ice packs to your cheeks 20 mins on 20 mins off for the first 24 hours to reduce the amount of swelling
  - If you have a sudden increase in pain or swelling more than 4 days after your procedure, please call this office to make a follow-up appointment

- **Diet**
  - On the day of the procedure start with clear liquids (water, Gatorade, apple juice) using a cup or spoon (avoid using straws for the first week)
  - If your stomach tolerates clear liquids okay, move on to cool, soft foods for the rest of the day (milkshakes, Jell-O, pudding, protein shakes or Ensure shakes, cottage cheese, yogurt, applesauce, avocado, banana)
  - The day after surgery, muscle stiffness and discomfort are the only restrictions to what you can eat or drink, so start with soft foods like scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, pasta, soups, cooked vegetables, oatmeal, pancakes, meatloaf, macaroni and cheese. If you do well with that, you can begin to progress your diet as tolerated from there
  - If you had teeth removed from the lower jaw, avoid foods with small hard pieces that can get stuck down in the sockets (popcorn kernels, nuts, seeds) for the first two months or until the socket is completely healed

- **Nausea**
  - Frequent sips of a carbonated drink (i.e. Coca Cola or Gingerale) will usually terminate nausea. Follow this with a clear diet (apple juice, clear tea, broths, and Jell-O). If nausea continues, contact this office.

- **Oral hygiene**
  - The day after surgery rinse mouth with warm salt water after each meal and at bedtime
  - Brush your teeth as usual but avoid brushing the gums at the surgical site
  - For the first week, avoid over the counter mouthwashes (Scope, Listerine) as they may irritate the area
Stitches may be used to close the wounds, and if so they will dissolve and fall out on their own in 3-14 days (depending on the type of suture), try to leave them alone until they fall out on their own.

- **Activity**
  - If you have had sedation or general anaesthesia, do not drive for 24 hours
  - Rest and relax on the day of the procedure
  - After the first day, you may go about your daily activities, but avoid strenuous activity for about a week

- **Smokers**
  - Smoking dramatically increases the risk of a dry socket and also delays wound healing
  - Do NOT smoke at least for the first 48 hours, preferably 1 week

- **Dentures**
  - If you had dentures placed after your surgery, don’t remove them for 48 hours unless directed by the dentist or denturist who made them

- **Numbness**
  - After your procedure, your mouth will be numb from the local anaesthesia
  - The numbness can last between 2 and 10 hours after surgery, depending on the type used
  - Occasionally numbness of the lower lip or chin or tongue may persist longer than 3-10 hours if teeth were removed from the lower jaw. This is most often a temporary condition which will resolve on its own. If it has not resolved 7-10 days after the procedure, call this office to schedule a follow-up appointment

- **Usual medications**
  - Unless directed otherwise, you may take all of your regular home medications without interruption

- **Sinus precautions**
  - If your surgery involved the sinus cavities: do not blow your nose for 2 weeks, sneeze with mouth open only, do not smoke or drink through a straw, do not play a wind instrument or blow up balloons, no heavy lifting
  - It is not uncommon for blood to fill up the sinus following surgery, which may slowly come out of the nose or into the back of the throat over the first week

Keep in mind, the extent of your particular surgery will influence the magnitude of your symptoms during recovery. The following conditions may occur and are not considered abnormal:

- The area operated on will usually swell and may become quite large
- Bruising may occur on the outside of the face, and may extend from the eyes to the collarbones
- Stiffness of the muscles may cause difficulty in opening the mouth and general muscle stiffness may be present for several days
- You may have a slight ear-ache or headache
- If you suffered from TMJ pain prior to the procedure, this may be temporarily worsened
- You may have had a tube through your nose into your throat during surgery, and this may cause a sore nose or throat
- Your other teeth may ache temporarily. This is called sympathetic pain and is a temporary condition
- Your lips may be dry and cracked. Keep moist with Vaseline, Polysporin, or other cream
- There may be a slight increase in your temperature for 24 to 48 hours. If this continues past 48 hours, please contact this office

Any applicable special instructions for your particular surgery: __________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Each person responds differently to surgery and you may have special circumstances that would necessitate changes from these printed guidelines. It is preferable that you call us first instead of your family doctor or dentist. Please do not hesitate to call this number during the day or night or on weekends: **403-263-5193**