

# Post-Care Instructions for Your New Dental Implant

Following these instructions carefully is vital for the success of your dental implant and a smooth, comfortable recovery.

## Phase 1: Immediate Care (The First 24 Hours)

**Apply Gentle Pressure to the Gauze:** A gauze pack has been placed over the site. Bite down firmly for 30-45 minutes to help stop any initial bleeding and form a stable blood clot. Change the gauze only if bleeding is heavy, and discard the old one.

**Start Pain Medication Before Numbness Wears Off**, this will help manage discomfort before the local anesthetic fully wears off.

**Apply Ice to Your Cheek** on the outside of your cheek, **20 minutes on** and **20 minutes off**, for the first 12-24 hours. This is the most effective way to limit swelling.

**Keep Your Head Elevated:** Rest with your head propped up on 2-3 pillows, or sit semi-upright. This helps reduce blood flow to the head and minimizes swelling.

**Avoid Disturbing the Site: DO NOT** rinse, spit, suck through a straw, or touch the surgical area with your tongue or finger. Sometimes a **smooth metal healing abutment** is placed on top of a dental implant which can be felt by the tongue.

## Phase 2: Healing and Comfort (Days 2 to 7)

### Managing Symptoms

**Swelling:** Swelling usually **peaks 2-3 days** after surgery. After 48 hours, switch from cold packs to a **moist, warm compress (20 min on, 20 min off)** to help the swelling go down.

**Pain:** Pain should gradually lessen each day. Continue taking prescribed or over-the-counter pain medication as directed.

**Bruising:** Bruising on the face/neck is common and will fade on its own over 5-10 days.

### Hygiene & Medications

**Rinsing:** Starting **24 hours** after surgery, gently rinse with a glass of **warm salt water** ( ½ tsp of salt) 3-4 times a day, especially after meals. **Swish very gently—do not spit forcefully.**

**Brushing:** You may brush your teeth in all areas **except** the surgical site. Use a soft-bristled brush and be extremely gentle around the implant/stitches.

**Electric Toothbrushes/Water Flossers: DO NOT USE** in the treated area for **at least 1 month**, or as directed.

**Antibiotics:** take the entire course as directed, even if you feel fine.

### Suture Care (Stitches)

- **Dissolvable Sutures** are self-resorbing and will naturally fall out or dissolve within **7–14 days**.
- **Non-Dissolvable Sutures** need to be removed typically in 7–10 days, your appointment will be scheduled accordingly
- **If a Suture Comes Loose:** Do not panic. If it is beyond the first 48 hours, the site is often secure. If it is early or you notice significant bleeding, **call us**.
- **Leave Them Alone:** Do not try to remove or touch the sutures with your finger / tongue.
- **Protecting Your New Implant: Food, Drink, & Activity**  
**Avoid**
  - **Hard, Crunchy or Chewy Foods** like nuts, ice, hard candy, gum, popcorn.
  - **Very Hot Foods or Liquids** can increase swelling or restart bleeding. Allow all food and drinks to cool to a lukewarm temperature.
  - **Absolutely NO smoking** for **at least 2 weeks**, as it severely compromises healing and can lead to implant failure. **Avoid alcohol** for **at least 48 hours**.
  - **Strenuous Activity:** Avoid heavy lifting, bending over, or vigorous exercise for 3-5 days. Keep physical activity to minimum to prevent bleeding.
- **Recommended Diet (For the first 1-2 weeks)**
  - **Liquids & Soft Foods:** Focus on nutrient-rich foods that require no chewing: ice cream , yogurt, smoothies, curd rice, khichdi, soups, cottage cheese.
  - **Hydration:** Drink plenty of fluids (water, juice) to stay hydrated.
  - **Dentures:** If you wear a temporary appliance, wear it as little as possible or as directed, as it can put pressure on the healing site.

### **This is Normal (Expected)**

- **Minor oozing** or pink-tinged saliva for the first 24-48 hours.
- **Pain and swelling** that peaks on Day 2-3 and then begins to decrease.
- **Slight fever** 100.5°F or less for the first 24 hours.

### **When to Call Us**

**Excessive, bright red bleeding** that cannot be controlled by biting on gauze for 30-45 minutes.

**Pain or swelling that suddenly increases or worsens** after Day 4.

**High or persistent fever** (101°F or higher).

**Pus** (yellow/green discharge) or a consistently foul taste around the implant

**Numbness that persists** for more than 24 hours after the surgery

*If you have any questions or concerns that are not addressed here, **Call Us**.*

