



CROWN LENGTHENING POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST TWO WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY & CALL OUR OFFICE WITH ANY QUESTIONS PRIOR TO SURGERY

Crown lengthening is a surgical procedure to expose a greater amount of tooth structure to allow for restoration either where it would not have been previously possible or esthetically pleasing. The procedure is usually limited to just one tooth but may include several teeth. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt, follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification. **Our phone number is (541) 654-5482.**

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Limit activity the day of surgery. Keep head elevated by relaxing in a chair or using extra pillows while in bed or on the couch. Light physical work is okay the following day after surgery. Gradually return to your normal activity level throughout the week following your surgery. If you are doing something that is bothering the area then stop doing that activity.

DIET: Eat soft nourishing food. Avoid extremely hot foods. Do not use a straw until you are advised that it is okay. It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.) It is best to avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the surgery area. Over the next couple of days progress to solid foods. If you take nourishment regularly you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

MOUTH RINSES: Do not use commercial mouth rinses. Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water to either rinse gently with, or dab sparingly with a cotton swab on the teeth that were treated. Avoid dabbing the gums. Repeat as often as you like, but at least twice daily. This will help with extra comfort and healing. Do not spit liquids out in a forceful manner.

BRUSHING: Brush the areas in your mouth that were not affected by the surgical procedure. Please do not brush the surgical site until specifically advised to do so by our office. New oral hygiene instructions are typically given at your 2 week postoperative appointment.

SMOKING/CHEWING: The use of tobacco products greatly reduces the success of your recovery.

SUTURES: We place sutures during the crown lengthening procedure. When possible we prefer to use dissolvable material. These sutures may start working themselves out. Don't worry, that is normal. If they are bothering you then please call our office, otherwise we will be removing the sutures at your 2 week follow-up appointment.

SIDE EFFECTS

Bleeding: Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. Bleeding should never be severe. Bleeding may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the area and applying pressure for 30-45 minutes. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a tea bag (soaked in very hot water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) for 20 or 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

Swelling: Swelling is occasionally associated with crown lengthening. It can be minimized by wrapping a cold pack, ice bag or bag of frozen peas in a towel and applying firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off during the first 24 hours after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed. ***If you can take Ibuprofen; take 600 mg every 6 hours for 3-4 days.**

Pain: Our patients report mild to moderate discomfort following the procedure. The discomfort is usually most intense on days 4-8. Taking Ibuprofen as directed above is the best way to control pain. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication that can be taken in addition to the Ibuprofen. If you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you should be able to manage any discomfort better. Some patients find that stronger pain medicine causes nausea, but if you precede each pain pill with a small amount of food, chances for nausea will be reduced. The effects of pain medications vary widely among individuals. Some patients may even require two of the pain pills at one time. If you find you are taking large amounts of pain medicine at frequent intervals, please call our office. If you anticipate needing more prescription medication for the weekend, you must call for a refill during weekday business hours.

Nausea: Nausea is not uncommon after surgery and is typically a result of the pain medications. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food, and taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications, but call us if you do not feel better.

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 our office. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern. If you are having an after-hours emergency please call **Dr. Dow's cell phone at (541) 937-5417**. Telephone calls for narcotic (pain killer) prescription renewals are ONLY accepted during the office hours if 7a-4p.

Your Next visit:

Although it varies, most patients are seen for a postoperative visit about 2 weeks following crown lengthening surgery. This is a short appointment with the surgical assistant where healing is observed, questions are answered, sutures **may** be removed and you are given new oral hygiene instructions.