

ARDENT DENTAL

in Lynn Valley

IMPLANTS POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTION

If you are missing teeth – the decision to get implants is a big one. Replacing teeth has numerous health benefits, which is a post for another day. Prior to getting implants pre-operative meetings with your surgeon and discussing your needs and expectations of surgery are essential, but what you do after surgery can be as equally important to the process. If you are scheduled for dental implant surgery, be sure to read through these main points in order to prepare for your recovery:

Cold Compress. Swelling and bruising are both common after surgery. To reduce swelling and discomfort, apply a cold compress to the cheek on the side of surgery. We generally recommend a cycle of icing for 20-30 minutes followed by 10 minutes with the ice pack off, as much as you can for the first 24-36 hours postoperatively. Icing is important but don't worry about staying awake to ice! You can make a cold compress out of an ice pack, a plastic bag filled with ice, or a bag of frozen peas. Make sure to keep a paper towel or washcloth between the icepack and your skin to avoid skin irritation.

Rest. It's important to rest and focus on your healing after you undergo oral surgery. We recommend reducing activity postoperatively, as exercise and strenuous activity cause increased blood flow, which can cause more discomfort and swelling at the surgical site. Additionally, since your diet is limited postoperatively, your normal nourishment is decreased, which can lead to a feeling of dizziness with strenuous activity. Therefore, it is recommended to abstain from certain exercises and strenuous physical activity until you are closer to being fully healed. If you are usually very active, please speak with Dr. Bach about when you can go back to your regular activities.

Eliminate Tobacco. Smoking and the use of tobacco products affect the healing process, extending recovery time and increasing risks of postoperative problems. The best way of reducing these risks is to quit entirely, but we know that this can be difficult to do. If you are trying to quit Dr. Bach is happy to work with you in any way they can to help you achieve your goal. For patients who continue to smoke, we recommend abstaining as long as possible both before and after surgery.

Take Medication As Directed. It's important that you take any medication as directed. Be sure to take any prescribed antibiotics as directed to help prevent infection.

Pain Medication. For pain, begin taking pain medication after your surgery but before the local anesthetic has worn off. For moderate pain, we recommend Ibuprofen or Tylenol. Over the counter Ibuprofen (the generic name for Advil/Motrin) usually comes as 200mg tablets; 2-3 tablets (400-600mg) may be taken every 6 hours (with food or milk). Acetaminophen (the generic for Tylenol) may also be taken as 2 325mg tablets every 4-6 hours (not to exceed 4 grs per day). For severe pain, Dr. Bach will likely prescribe a prescription pain medication which should be taken as directed. If your prescription pain medication contains Tylenol (acetaminophen) you should not take over the counter Tylenol products, although you can still take Ibuprofen.*

**Do not take any of the above medication if you are allergic, have contraindications to taking it, or have been instructed by your doctor not to take it. Do not exceed the recommended dosages as this can have serious negative effects on your health.*

Eat Soft Foods. During the healing phase it may be difficult to chew. We recommend eating soft, bland foods that are easy to digest and avoiding anything acidic (such as orange juice) or spicy. It is very important to maintain good nutrition for proper healing. Often, we recommend that patients focus on drinking lots of fluids and eating small frequent meals. Foods that are good to eat postoperatively include:

- Soup
- Mashed potatoes
- Yogurt
- Eggs
- Apple sauce
- Rice
- Hummus

Any other foods you enjoy that do not require chewing are also great options, as are nutrient shakes such as Ensure or Boost. As you continue to heal, you can gradually re-introduce firmer foods back into your diet. Make sure to talk to your doctor about when chewing can be resumed.

Follow Up Appointments. It's extremely important to keep all of your scheduled appointments and contact our office to discuss any questions or issues that arise during the course of your healing process. We want to ensure that your recovery is as easy as possible and are more than happy to provide you with insight and recommendations into the healing process. We're here to help, so please contact us with any questions or concerns.

Healing Takes Time. The main thing to consider is that healing just takes time. Osseointegration (oss-ee-oh-in-tuh-GRAY-shun), which is the process where the jawbone grows and unites with the surface of the dental implant, can take up to six months. Take it easy on your body and your mouth as your bone helps make a new solid base for your new implant. Rest, give your body what it needs to heal, and contact Dr. Bach, and the staff here at Valley Centre Dental Group if you have any questions at all.