

AFTERCARE AFTER DENTAL IMPLANT SURGERY

Please read this carefully — the first two weeks really matter

A dental implant is a small investment in your long-term smile, and the first couple of weeks of healing matter. These instructions will help your implant settle comfortably and integrate well with the bone.

THE FIRST 24 HOURS

- Bite gently on the gauze for around 30 minutes after you leave. Light oozing is normal for several hours.
- Apply a cold compress or ice pack wrapped in a tea towel to the cheek over the area — 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off — for the first few hours. This helps reduce swelling.
- Do not rinse, spit forcefully, or use a straw on the day of surgery.
- Avoid hot food and drinks until the numbness has fully worn off.
- Stick to cool, soft foods — yoghurt, smoothies (no straw), mashed potato, scrambled egg.
- Sleep with your head propped on an extra pillow for the first two nights.
- Rest for the remainder of the day. Avoid strenuous exercise, alcohol and bending over.

FROM DAY 2 TO WEEK 2

- From the morning after surgery, gently rinse with warm salt water (one teaspoon in a glass of warm water) after meals and before bed. Let the water fall out of your mouth rather than spitting forcefully.
- If we have prescribed chlorhexidine mouthwash, use it as directed — usually twice a day, away from brushing.
- Brush your other teeth as normal. Around the implant, brush very gently with a soft toothbrush from day 2, avoiding the stitches if present.
- Eat soft foods on the opposite side for the first 7–10 days. Gradually return to a normal diet as comfort allows.
- Some bruising and swelling around the cheek, lip or under the eye is normal and usually peaks at day 2–3.

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

- Please do not smoke or vape during the healing period. Smoking significantly increases the risk of implant failure and is the single most important thing within your control.

- Avoid alcohol for at least 48 hours, and certainly while taking any prescribed medication.

PAIN RELIEF

- Paracetamol and ibuprofen taken together (as directed on the packet) work well for most people. Take the first dose before the local anaesthetic wears off.
- Avoid aspirin, which can increase bleeding.
- Finish any prescribed antibiotics in full, even once you feel better.

STITCHES AND HEALING CAPS

- Most stitches we use are dissolvable and disappear within 1–2 weeks.
- If we have placed a small healing cap above the gum, you may feel it with your tongue. This is normal — please do not pick at it.
- We will see you for a short check-up around 1–2 weeks after surgery to make sure everything is settling well.

Please contact us if... *bleeding has not settled after firm pressure for an hour, pain is not controlled by paracetamol and ibuprofen, swelling is increasing after day 3 rather than going down, you develop a temperature, the implant or healing cap feels loose or comes out, you notice a bad taste or discharge, or you have any numbness in the lip, chin or tongue that is not improving.*

LOOKING AHEAD

- The implant integrates with the bone over 3–6 months, depending on the site. We will see you for review during this time.
- Once integrated, we will fit your final crown, bridge or denture. Your implant then needs the same care as a natural tooth: careful brushing, daily cleaning between teeth, and regular hygiene visits.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH

We are always here to help. If anything is worrying you, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us — we will do our best to put your mind at ease.