



## Aftercare Instructions for Dental Procedures

Home care is important to maintain a healthy smile. Here are some general tips on how to care for your child's smile after certain procedures.

### Numbness Post-Operative Instructions:

- The sensation of being numb after the appointment is typically the most challenging aspect for a child to understand. They may say "it itches" or "hurts" - this simply refers to the numb sensation. Assure your child that the area is "asleep" and will "wake-up" in a little while.
- It may take **1-4 hours** for the numbness to wear off.
- While the area is numb, avoid eating food that require chewing (a soft food diet is recommended, for example, yogurt, smoothies, or applesauce).
- **Monitor your child closely so that they do not bite their tongue, cheek, or lips.**
- A self-inflicted bite injury is the most common after-treatment complication. Children don't always understand the effects of local anesthesia, and may chew, scratch, suck, or play with the numb area. These actions can cause minor irritations or they can be severe enough to cause swelling and abrasions to the tissue. The injured area may appear swollen, white/yellow, and "infected". However, this is not a result of infection and does not require antibiotics. You may apply Vaseline / petroleum jelly and the area will heal in 7-10 days without leaving any scar of the incident.

*Please do not hesitate to call the office at (203)-433-5439 if you have any questions or concerns.*

### Composite (tooth-colored) filling(s)

- Your child may be numb so please follow the post-op instructions for numbness.
- Resume normal diet when numbness ends. Brush and floss teeth daily.
- If the filling was placed on a front tooth, avoid using the front teeth to bite directly into hard foods such as apples, carrots, and corn on the cob. This may cause the filling to break from the tooth.

### Crown(s)

- Your child will be numb so please follow the post-op instructions for numbness.
- To seat the crown correctly, treatment was completed just below the gumline; therefore, your child's gums may be sore for 2-3 days. Your child's gum tissue may bleed upon brushing for the next few days. To help with healing, keep the area clean by gently brushing 2-3 times a day and flossing.
- For any discomfort, give your child children's Motrin or Tylenol as directed by the manufacturer as needed. Do NOT give aspirin.

Extraction (s)

- Have your child bite on the provided gauze until bleeding is controlled, which may take up to 30 minutes
- Remember that your child's cheek, lips, and tongue may be numb for approximately 1-4 hours after the procedure.
- Avoid sippy cups, bottles, straws, and pacifiers for the first 24 hours after the procedure as the sucking action may cause prolonged bleeding.
- Avoid hard or crunchy foods (e.g. potato chips) for the first 24 hours as this may irritate the extraction site. Cold and soft foods are a great choice (e.g. ice cream, applesauce, mac and cheese) instead.
- A small amount of oozing is normal; however, if bleeding becomes heavy have your child bite on a gauze or moistened tea bag for 15 minutes.
- If bleeding continues or is not controlled, call our office.
- For discomfort, give your child children's Motrin or Tylenol as directed by the manufacturer as needed. DO NOT give aspirin.

Space Maintainer

- It may take a few days for your child to adjust to the spacer. Do not let your child pick or pull at the spacer as continuous force and pressure can pull it off.
- Keep your child away from sticky, chewy, hard, or crunchy foods such as gum, caramels, Milk Duds, licorice, gummy bears, jelly beans, beef jerky, nuts, popcorn, ice, hard candies, and jaw breakers. These foods can get wrapped around the wire, bend the wire, or get stuck in the band, causing the appliance to break or become loose.
- If your child's space maintainer comes loose or breaks, call our office so we can evaluate and decide whether the appliance needs to be reinforced or rebuilt.

