

## Care of Mouth Following Sinus Surgery

- **Do not spit. Use a tissue to wipe your mouth, or swallow your saliva.**
- **Do not drink through a straw. Drink straight from the cup.**
- **Do not smoke as this increases risk of infection and may delay healing** (14 days is recommended for optimal healing)
- **Keep your fingers and tongue away from the surgical area.**
- **Do not blow your nose, for up to two weeks following surgery.**
- **If you must cough or sneeze, make sure your mouth is open when doing so.**

**Bleeding** – Minor bleeding is expected after surgical treatment. It will usually subside quickly and stop within an hour or two after surgery. A little oozing is normal and may persist for several hours. It is not unusual for there to be a little trickle of blood from your nose on the same side as the sinus surgery in the first couple of days. This can be prevented by keeping your head elevated (above your heart). Keep gauze on the surgical area with biting pressure for 30-45 minutes. Remove gauze after 30-45 minutes and replace it with a new piece if bleeding has not stopped. It is important to make sure the gauze is directly on the surgical site. Firm pressure for another hour should stop the bleeding. If you find this is not working after your third attempt, use a moistened tea bag instead of the gauze. The tannic acid in tea will help form a clot and stop the bleeding.

**Swelling** – Most patients will experience some swelling after surgery. It may be mild or severe and is different for every patient. The swelling may increase for the first 24-48 hours before it starts to subside. It may last for several days. Some bruising may also develop on the face and is normal. Use an ice pack on the cheek or face next to the surgical site. Keep it on for 15-20 minutes, then off for 10 minutes, and repeat until you go to sleep. Start again the next day. Sleep with your head elevated (above the heart). This will keep swelling down. On the third day, change to moist heat instead of ice packs. This will bring swelling down quicker.

**Oral Hygiene** - Do not perform any oral hygiene for the remainder of the day of your surgery. Do not rinse or spit on the day of surgery. Spitting will cause more bleeding. Beginning the day following your surgery, you may return to your normal hygiene regimen for all untreated areas of your mouth. The surgical site, however, should not be touched. You will be prescribed an antimicrobial mouth rinse for use in this area during the post-operative phase. Please note that your teeth may experience some degree of increased temperature sensitivity. This is common immediately after surgery and will gradually decrease. Oral cleanliness is essential to proper healing.

**Diet** - Avoid eating or drinking anything very hot or cold for the first few days after surgery. Avoid foods with sharp edges (chips, pretzels, etc.) and do not chew immediately over the surgery area. Your diet should be relatively soft during the post-operative period. Avoid carbonated and alcoholic beverages for 24 hours and do not use a straw for two weeks. *You must take at least two glasses of liquid with pain medication.*

**Medications** – Take all medications as directed. A nasal spray is recommended to promote drainage. Saline nasal sprays can be purchased over the counter at any drugstore/pharmacy. Two puffs in each nostril 6+ times per day (as needed). A decongestant also promotes sinus drainage. An antihistamine may be recommended to avoid sneezing. Use these only if Dr. Barker has recommended them.

**Please call Dr. Barker directly if you have any concerns after office hours:  
443-343-2314 Leave name, phone number and a brief message**