

## **FILLINGS POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS**

Please remember that after dental work, it can take time to adjust to the feel of your new bite. When your bite is altered or the position of your teeth changed, it can take several days for your brain to recognize the new position or thickness of your teeth. This is completely normal.

### **Post-Procedure Tips**

- If you detect any high spots or problems with your bite, call our office so we can schedule an appointment to adjust your bite.
- It's normal to experience some hot and cold sensitivity following a filling procedure. Teeth require some time to heal after removal of tooth structure and may be sensitive in the meantime.
- Soreness in the gum tissue surrounding your tooth is common after certain procedures; however, symptoms usually disappear within a few days. Rinsing with warm salt water in the area can help alleviate the soreness and promote faster healing.
- If you were given a local anesthetic, you'll want to refrain from drinking or eating hot liquids or foods until the numbness wears off to prevent scalding yourself. Also, avoid chewing in the area to prevent accidentally biting your tongue or jaw.

### **Reasons for Discomfort**

- At the site where the local anesthetic (numbing agent) was injected, you might have some bruising or swelling that will resolve in a few days—just like a bruise that occurs anywhere else on your body.
- Take an anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or naproxen to limit or resolve any initial discomfort. Normally, the discomfort will disappear within the next few days or weeks. If the pain doesn't subside or becomes severe, give us a call.
- Your jaw might be sore due to keeping your mouth open for an extended period during the procedure. If you experience temporomandibular (TMJ) soreness, avoid opening your mouth extremely wide or chewing on foods that cause

discomfort until the issue resolves. An ice pack or warm compress along with an anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or naproxen can help.

- You may notice increased salivation. This is because your brain is responding to the new size and shape of your teeth. This should return to normal in about a week.

### **Taking Care of Your Dental Work**

- Daily brushing and flossing are a must. Consistent plaque removal is critical for the long-term success of your new restoration as are regular professional cleaning appointments.
- Any food that can crack, chip, or damage a natural tooth can do the same to your new filling. *Do not bite into hard foods* such as hard nuts, peanut brittle, ice, apples, frozen candy bars, sticky caramel, or anything else that can put undue pressure on your teeth.
- ***Never use your teeth as tools!*** Teeth are not meant to open frozen vegetable bags, pull on strings, or hold objects. Also, no biting on fingernails, chewing pencils, or doing anything else that could cause pressure or trauma to your teeth.
- While refraining from coffee, red wine, tea, and berries isn't realistic for most people, these things *will* stain your teeth, as will tobacco. Use a straw as much as possible for liquids, and always brush, floss, and rinse your teeth with a whitening mouthwash as soon as possible after consuming drinks and foods that stain.

If you have any questions or concerns following your filling procedure, please let us know!