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## **JAWS WIRED SHUT**

It is very important to keep your mouth very clean. This, of course, will be difficult, but with meticulous care, it can be done. A small (child-size) toothbrush can be used on the outside of the teeth to keep the wires and teeth free of debris. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT to stop the possibility of rapid decay of the teeth and infection. Cepacol® or water mouth rinses in addition to brushing as often as possible will be very helpful.

Diet is another important consideration. Because of your inability to chew, it will be very difficult to take an adequate diet. Therefore, several meals (six, seven or eight per day) will be necessary. High calorie, high-protein full-liquids will be your diet for the entire fixation period. Things like malts, milkshakes (blended with any form of protein supplement in powder or liquid form for higher protein content) will be necessary. Anything that can be mixed with whole milk and fortified in a blender will help the dietary intake. This is not a time to lose weight, although a certain number of pounds will be lost no matter how careful you are. Additional dietary supplements may include Carnation® Instant Breakfast, Boost®, Ensure®, etc. Liquid multi-vitamins should also be used.

Bowel habits may change during your fixation period. Following surgery, it is not uncommon not to have a bowel movement for even several days. Remember, the bowel is a storage organ and the less that enters it, especially liquids, the less residue one can expect. If this becomes a problem, consult your oral surgeon at one of your routine appointments.

Medications which have been prescribed for you are also important. If an antibiotic has been prescribed, it is very important to continue this medication as directed until all has been taken. Also, a liquid pain medication can be taken as directed only if needed for discomfort.

Nausea is no cause for alarm. Remember that even if you should become nauseated and vomit, everything that is in your stomach has been strained through your teeth. However, at the first sign of persistent, significant nausea, call your oral surgeon and he will prescribe anti-nausea medication for you in suppository form.

All patients with jaws wired together should not drink alcohol for the period of fixation. No vigorous exercise or swimming should be allowed because of the difficulty in breathing and the strain on your fixation wires. To facilitate breathing, a decongestant spray (ex. Afrin® nasal spray) should be purchased at the pharmacy and carried with the patient for cases of nasal congestion. This should be used sparingly.

Your period of fixation (having your jaws wired shut) will range from 1-12 weeks depending on your individual type of fracture or the corrective procedure.

You should carry your wire cutters with you at all times to be used to cut all vertical wires between your upper and lower teeth in case of emergency.

Feel free to call the office (215-884-8263) should any problem develop. Dr. Moriconi will be able to assist you. Should an immediate emergency develop go to the nearest hospital Emergency Room.

*It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you. If you have questions about progress, call the office at 215-884-8263. If you need to speak with a doctor and the office is closed, follow the instructions that will be provided on the recording. If you have an emergency and the office is closed, call 911 or proceed to the nearest hospital emergency room.*