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## **TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT ARTHROCENTESIS**

### **Postoperative Instructions**

You have just undergone temporomandibular joint arthrocentesis (washing of your joint). This handout is designed to explain your postoperative course, limitations and what to expect.

A small bandage will be placed over your surgical site. This should remain in place for two to three hours following your surgery.

A small amount of blood may be noted on the bandage. This is Normal. The bandage can be removed after three hours.

You should not experience any bleeding after removing the bandage. If you do experience bleeding, apply pressure with your thumb for ten minutes. If this fails to stop the bleeding, please call the office:

**(714) 998-7450**

You can expect some bruising and swelling in the surgical site. Application of ice for the first few hours is helpful. You may be sent home pain medication and only to be taken as necessary.

For four weeks following surgery, your diet should consist of a soft diet as chewing may disrupt the joint and can cause problems.

The diet does not need to be limited to liquids, but the consistency should be that of cottage cheese, pasta, egg salad, and other soft foods that do not require heavy chewing. You should begin jaw exercises on the third day following your surgery. These are stretching exercises to reduce stiffness in the joint associated with the surgery. This should be performed several times a day.

Careful stretching and gentle range-of-motion, (Opening your mouth) exercises are very important in your recovery. You should open your jaw as wide as you can and hold it in place. The first week, you should be able to open enough to get two fingers in between your upper and lower teeth.

By the second week after surgery, you should be opening wide enough to fit three fingers between your upper and lower teeth. This can be achieved by gentle stretching of the jaw with your fingers.