INSTRUCTIONS TO PATIENTS FOLLOWING CROWN LENGTHENING SURGERY

PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY
The after effects of periodontal surgery can vary from individual to individual, so not all of these instructions may apply. Please feel free to call our office at any time should you have any questions or are experiencing any unusual symptoms following your surgery.

DISCOMFORT AND MEDICATIONS
You have been given a local anesthetic and it is normal for you to remain numb for several hours following surgery. To minimize discomfort, it is best to start taking your pain medication prior to the local anesthetic wearing off, approximately one hour after your surgery. If you do not achieve adequate relief, you may take an analgesic such as Tylenol, Advil or Aleve. Taking the pain medication with soft food and water will lessen any side effects of nausea or upset stomach. Continue to take your pain medication as directed, as long as needed. You were also given an antibiotic that is to be taken daily, as directed, until gone.

BLEEDING
Some bleeding is normal following crown lengthening surgery. A gauze sponge may have been placed in the surgical area. To keep pressure on the surgical site, bite on the gauze for 20 minutes; replace if needed. Blood tinged saliva may be present for 24 hours. In order to avoid potential bleeding problems, you must avoid rinsing vigorously or using a straw for the first 48 hours. Bleeding should not be severe. If bleeding persists, use a moist tea bag (first soak in hot water, squeeze dry, and wrap in gauze) biting down on the area for 20-30 minutes. If bleeding continues, please call our office.

SWELLING OR BRUISING
Swelling is a normal sign of healing and usually reaches its peak in 48 hours. To minimize swelling, ice packs should be placed on the face, adjacent to the surgical area. Ice packs should be applied, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off, during the first 24 hours after surgery. After 24 hours, it is usually best to switch from ice packs to applying moist heat or a heating pad to the area until swelling recedes. Tightness of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening the mouth; this can occur for up to 10 days after surgery. If this should occur, apply warm moist heat to the jaw joints as often as possible. Motrin and Aleve are anti-inflammatory and can be taken one every 6-8 hours, as needed for discomfort. Bruising may also occur and will usually fade within 4-7 days.

SURGICAL DRESSING
A surgical dressing may have been placed to protect the surgical area. The dressing is a pink, putty-like material resembling bubble gum that has been placed around the teeth in
the surgical area. It should stay in place until your first postoperative visit. If the dressing comes out, please call the office and we may replace it. **It is very important that the pack remains in place throughout your treatment.**

**DIET**
Adequate nutrition is essential for healing. It is advisable that the day of surgery you confine your diet to softer foods, such as soup, pasta, yogurt, pudding, fish, eggs, and mashed potatoes. Drink plenty of water and other liquids. Avoid solid foods and hot liquids the day of surgery. Over the next several days, progress to more solid foods. Return to your normal diet as soon as you feel comfortable. **AVOID** foods with nuts or seeds such as strawberries, raspberries, rye bread, or poppy seeds. Also avoid popcorn, French bread or hard rolls.

**AVOID SMOKING**
Smoking delays the healing process and may cause additional discomfort and complications.

**ORAL HYGIENE**
Beginning the day after your surgery, you may begin to lightly brush the biting surfaces of the teeth in the surgical area. Stay away from the dressing and gum area. **DO NOT** floss or use a proxabrush, electric toothbrush or water pick in the surgical area. If you were given chlorhexidine (Peridex) in your postoperative bag, rinse twice daily until we see you for your first postoperative visit. It is also recommended that you rinse with warm salt water 2-3 times daily. Brush and floss as normal in all other areas of the mouth. Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. If you have any questions about your progress or any symptoms you are experiencing, please call our office at 649-7766.