

## Care of Spacers

Today we placed a space maintainer in your child's mouth. The space maintainer is a small metal device that is custom fitted to your child's mouth. It is firmly fixed in the mouth and will be removed when the permanent tooth is in its proper position. It is cemented in place and is not removable. It is important that you take care of the space maintainer properly. The following suggestions will help you and your child care for it and avoid the cost and time of replacement. Please...

1. Avoid sticky sweets, popcorn, ice and chewing gum.
2. When tooth brushing, brush around the bands and behind the front lower teeth especially the wire. Inspect for any damage.
3. Floss behind the last tooth also. This will help prevent gum problems.
4. With proper brushing bands should always look shiny, not dull in color.
5. Avoid the attempt to push or tug the wire with the tongue or fingers, or play with it in any manner. This can alter or loosen it.

A loose spacer can be made comfortable at home until your child can be seen in the office in the following ways.

1. Replace the loosen band on the tooth.
2. Remove space maintainer totally (save and bring at next visit).
3. Sharp wires can be clipped with a fingernail clipper or smoothed with a metal emery board.

If spacer is left untreated, this condition may result in extensive orthodontic treatment.

Teeth are likely to be sore for the next couple of days, but it should not persist. We recommend the spacer should be checked every 3 to 6 months. The cement holding the bands in place can wash out. Therefore food can be trapped between the band and tooth where it can't be reached by brushing. Decay can begin here and destroy the tooth. The spacer needs to remain in the mouth until the permanent teeth erupt into all the space being saved or until there is no longer a need for it.

## Extractions and other Surgery

The mouth following tooth extractions or other surgical procedures will recover better and faster if the instructions given are followed carefully. What to expect.

It is not uncommon for the wound left after extractions to ooze during the initial 24 hours and for the saliva to taste a bit different and also to be colored pink at times. This should subside after the first day. The area around the wound will be sensitive for the first week, especially if hard food, fingers, toothpicks, toothbrush bristles or tongue touches it. This should subside after the first few days.

What to do

It is advisable to take some Tylenol, ibuprofen or any other over the counter analgesic as soon as your child gets home to make for an easier transition once the numbness wears off.

Do not disturb the blood clot which forms around the wound, as it heals from the bottom of the socket up. Avoid rinsing, and sucking through a straw or sippy cup for 24 hours. When brushing and flossing the teeth, avoid the extraction area the first 24 hours, but brush/floss all other areas.

Avoid eating while numb to lessen the risk of mistakenly chewing the lips or cheeks, a soft diet is recommended (pasta, yogurt, soups, mashed potatoes or milkshakes). Try to chew on the opposite side from the extraction or surgery site.

If the wound starts bleeding, place a folded sterile gauze pad over the area, have child keep pressure by biting the gauze in place for 15 minutes. Check and repeat if needed. Please call if your child's symptoms are more intense or longer than those described above.

**Ultimately what matters most to us is your child. If you have any questions on your child's procedures today please do not hesitate to call. 772-337-0899**

# Pediatric Dentistry of the Treasure Coast



Dr. Francisco Arias DDS, MS PA

*“Dentistry that is*

*Fun for Kids*

*and Trusted*

*by Parents...”*

**After Care Brochure**

## Local Anesthesia

Your child received local anesthesia for dental treatment. This makes the lips numb on the side it was used. Children who do not understand the effects of local anesthesia sometimes may suck or chew on the numb lip or cheek, thereby causing severe trauma to the tissue and swelling. This can become very uncomfortable and we ask that you please watch your child very closely for approximately two to four hours following the appointment. Also remind your child to chew his meals on the opposite side for the rest of the day.

## Care after Sedation Appointment

After about 1 to 2 hours we will be completing our scheduled treatment and your child will return home with you. Even though your child has already gone over the peak effect of the medication your child may want to sleep for two or more hours, or he may just be irritable and act over tired. We recommend that you allow him to sleep for about one hour as the anesthetic wears off. Wake your child up and allow him to drink any beverages of his choice. If your child still wants to sleep some more, it is OK to allow him once he has drank some liquids.

Once the numbness wears off encourage him to eat (soft diet is best initially: soup, applesauce, mashed potatoes).

If he does sleep, try to position him on his side and remove all cotton from the mouth. Put him in a crib, put the bed rails up, or let him sleep on the floor.

Upon awakening he may feel nauseous and warm. If so, give him some liquids to sip. While you may feed your child if he is hungry, be sure to wait at least two hours after the appointment (as he may be numbed) and give him some soft foods only. During the initial two hours, it is important to check for cheek and lip biting. He may also scratch his nose and face due to the itching sensation produced by the local anesthesia. You should try to discourage this behavior. You should watch your child carefully and not allow him on anything that he may fall. It is normal for the child's body to feel warm and appear flushed until the effects of the medicine wear off sometimes up to 16 hours afterwards. Your child may not be able to fall asleep at his usual bedtime that day. Do not be overly concerned. Tomorrow he will be back to his normal self.



## Care of Composite Crowns and Fillings

Your child has just had a composite resin filling / crown placed at this appointment. This material provides for the esthetic reconstruction of a front tooth or a back molar due to decay or a fracture. Please familiarize yourself with the following information.

1. The child may eat normally as soon as the local anesthetic wears off. No changes in diet are necessary as a result of this restoration.
2. While this material is strong, it does not compare in strength to the original tooth. Composite material can fracture if subjected to strong forces (blows to the tooth, biting on pencils, chewing ice, candy, toys, and bobby pins, ect.) these situations must be avoided if the fillings and crowns are to have the best chance for success.
3. Due to the somewhat porous nature of the composite resins, some amount of stain will accumulate over time. When this stain and discoloration occur, the crown may need to be replaced or professionally polished and sealed.
4. Some amount of wear will occur with composite fillings and crowns that may necessitate replacement. The degree of wear varies with the individual, thus, it is difficult to estimate the life span that can be anticipated from the restoration.
5. Keeping crowns plaque free with proper brushing and flossing will reduce the risks of necessary replacement.

## Care of Sealants

To Keep the sealants in good condition avoid:

1. Grinding your teeth.
2. Chewing ice .
3. Popcorn kernels .
4. Hard and sticky candy and foods .
5. Phosphoric, citric, tartaric and carbonic acid in soda.

Doing any of the above may result in sealant loss. It is recommended you come see us every six months to check the condition of the sealants. Sealants will be repaired as a courtesy if loss should occur up to 6 months after placement . Sealants are not a guarantee against decay. However, they have been found to be 90% effective in preventing decay if the above recommendations are followed along with good oral health care and six month visits.

## Care of Stainless Steel Crowns

1. Regular diet may be resumed after anesthetic effects are worn off. (as tolerated by your child)
2. It is not unusual for the gum tissue around the newly restored tooth to appear slightly irritated and inflamed for several days. Using salt-water rinses while irritation persists can ease this. (1/2 teaspoon of table salt in 6 ounces of warm water). Brushing and flossing the gums is still important.
3. Tylenol or ibuprofen should handle any post-op discomfort. However, please call if pain persists as a stronger medication can be prescribed.
4. Gum tissue around the tooth may bleed somewhat for up to several hours after the appointment. Should bleeding persist into the next day, please call our office.
5. The area around the crown should be brushed gently today, gradually increasing to normal toothbrush pressure in a few days. It is important to brush the area well; clean teeth will aid in fast healing of irritated gum tissue. Crown should always look shiny, if it is looking dull it is a good indication that it is not been cleaned properly.
6. Stainless steel crowns on primary teeth will come out with the primary tooth when the permanent tooth is ready to erupt.
7. Stainless steel crowns on permanent teeth may need to be replaced by a casted crown when the child is in his/her mid to upper teens, or later in life.

## Care of Fluoride Varnish

After the application of Fluoride Varnish you will feel a coating and may notice a difference in color while the varnish remains on the teeth. To obtain the maximum benefit during the 4-6 hour treatment period, we ask that you take the following care after you leave the office.

1. Do not remove the Varnish by flossing and brushing for at least 6 hours.
2. If possible, wait until tomorrow morning to resume oral hygiene
3. Eat a soft food diet during the treatment period.
4. Avoid hot drinks and oral rinses during the treatment period.
5. A thorough brushing and flossing will easily remove any remaining Varnish. Your teeth will return to the same shine and brightness as before the treatment.