



#### PROSTHODONTIC ASSOCIATES DENTAL POST-OP

## **HEALTHY HEALING** & NUTRITION GUIDE





Your prosthodontist/periodontist/oral surgeon has explained the procedure. They have managed your expectations, and have addressed your pain management concerns. They have warned you that your mouth will be sensitive for the next few days, possibly weeks.

And yet, you are left wondering what it is that you will be eating during the healing period. After all, food and nutrition are vital components of the body's natural healing processes. Well, fear not – we've got you covered!



### + WHY IS NUTRITION IMPORTANT?

#### We have all heard the popular saying -You are what you eat - and it's true...

The foods that we eat quite literally become the building blocks of our cells and tissues. Your food choices ultimately control how well your body can repair itself – both in terms of speed and efficacy. Nutrition and digestion are intimately connected to the immune system – which is the deciding factor in how well you are going to heal and how you are going to feel during the process.

Over the years, the traditional approach to healing after dental surgery is to keep the diet fairly soft, liquid even, and quite bland. Classically, Jell-O, meal replacement drinks, flavourless soups, and boiled meats have been suggested.

While the logic is correct – keeping foods soft and easily digestible – the selection is all wrong. After (and before) surgery is when your body needs an abundance of nutrients most!

In today's world we are completely overwhelmed in every sense. We experience stress at work and at home. Eating healthy, nutrient dense food is harder than ever. Our city is congested and under construction, and we are breathing in exhaust, dust and debris at every intersection. Not to mention, the recycled air in our homes and workplaces is not conducive to healthy immune systems. Each of these factors increases the work load on our immune system and contributes to a level of baseline inflammation in the body.

Our goal at PA is to work together to help minimize the level of inflammation in the body, as well as in your mouth postsurgery.

The easiest way to influence this is by making strategic choices when it comes to what we put into our bodies.

### **+ WHAT SHOULD I BE EATING?**

### Should I eat carbs? What about meat? What about fruit?

It seems that the concepts of nutrition and eating well are getting more complicated every day.

So when answering "what should you be eating", the answer is really quite simple - it depends. Each person is unique, and the foods that serve their body best have to be tailored to what makes them feel best.

You know you best, and you are the best gauge for what works for you. That being said, you should be eating foods that minimize your body's immune response and keep overall (chronic) inflammation levels low.

What does that mean, exactly? Generally speaking, foods that serve the body best are vegetables, fruit, clean and ethically sourced proteins, and whole, minimally processed grains, legumes, nuts and seeds.



### X THE STANDARD AMERICAN DIET

The Western Diet, or more commonly referred to as the Standard American Diet (S.A.D.) is just that – sad.

It is a diet that is high in sugar, refined carbohydrates, dairy, meat, and unhealthy fats. It is low in fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains and healthy fats.

You can probably picture it as being comprised of typically 'American' foods – burgers, fries, pizza, ice cream, fried chicken, coffee in excess, white breads, pastas, potatoes, candy bars, convenience foods etc. Generally speaking, SAD foods are loaded with sugar, fat, and salt, all designed to alter how you taste food and to keep you addicted to processed foods.

Recent studies have found that sugar is more addictive than cocaine! The SAD diet has been closely correlated with increased rates of diabetes, obesity, arthritis, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, etc., and while the pathway for every disease is different, what is similar in each case is an increased base level of chronic inflammation.

### **+** ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DIET: AN INTRODUCTION

# Nearly everything we interact with impacts our immune system, which creates a base-level of chronic inflammation in the body.

The good news is that by minimizing inflammation in the body we can improve our overall health and wellness, and in this case, potentially reduce healing times, pain and discomfort that are a direct result of surgery.

In fact, inflammation isn't all bad - it is a naturally occurring process in the body, and it serves a definite purpose.

For example, after your procedure you will likely experience swelling and pain. This is completely normal - your body has just experienced a trauma. In fact, it is necessary, since it is in this way that the body creates its plan of attack for healing the affected area. If you burn yourself or get a sunburn the affected skin turns red. Blood vessels are expanding so that blood flow can be increased, increasing the number of blood cells whose job it is to repair the damaged skin. In this case inflammation is a wonderful thing – even if it doesn't feel so wonderful at the time.

But our bodies are inflamed from our everyday lives, which shows up as arthritis, headaches, acne, weight gain, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, even cancer – the list goes on and on.

This type of inflammation is bad, and keeps our immune system too busy to devote its full attention to the more pressing issue of repair- in this case, repairing your mouth.



## ✓ WHAT CAN I EAT?

# The Anti-Inflammatory diet protocol is largely based on the Mediterranean Diet.

That means fiber from vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, protein from wild caught fish and natural meats, fats from nuts, seeds, and healthy oils. It leaves out refined and processed foods, sugars, trans-fats, artificial sweeteners and anything that is fake. It swaps coffee for tea, and low-fat or fat-free dairy products for their full fat counterparts, gluten is greatly reduced or eliminated, and refined sugar is removed.

- Apples
- Avocado
- Beans and Legumes lentils, chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans, navy beans
- Beef (grass fed)
- Blueberries
- Bok choy
- Bone broth
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Cayenne
- Celery (and celery seeds)
- Chia seeds
- Chicken (organic, pasture raised)
- Cinnamon

- Citrus
- Coconut oil
- Eggs (organic, pasture raised)
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Flaxseeds
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Grass fed butter
- Green leafy vegetables kale, spinach, collard greens, Swiss chard, lettuce
- Herbs basil, parsley, coriander, cilantro, dill, thyme, rosemary, oregano, mint
- Kefir
- Lamb (pasture raised, grass fed)
- Mango
- Mushrooms
- Nuts and Seeds

- Onion
- Peppers
- Pineapple
- Pumpkin / Squash
- Raw honey
- Sardines
- Seaweed
- Sesame
- Sweet potato
- Tea
- Turkey (organic)
- Turmeric
- Walnuts
- Whole grains
- Whole, organic soy
- Wild salmon and other wild caught fish

## + SUPPLEMENTS

### Unfortunately, the way we live makes it nearly impossible for us to get all the nutrients we need to be our best selves from food alone. This is where supplements shine.

We can ensure that we are at least receiving a baseline level of necessary nutrients from supplements so that our bodies can function at a base level. Think of it like a welfare level of nutrition – it's not nearly equivalent to eating a proper diet – but it's creating a small cushion for your body to be able to function.



We have created an optimized supplement program for your health and healing through your surgery. Please let us know of any past complications you may have had with supplementation or vitamin programmes.

We recommend that you take the supplements both before and after your procedure. By doing so, you are providing your immune system with extra support when it needs it most.

Think of it as a parallel to training before a big race. You wouldn't just show up and run a marathon, would you? Of course not! You would make sure that your body and mind are prepared to endure the physical strain of the run.

The same goes for surgery. By ensuring that your body is getting the nutrients it needs in the right amounts before your procedure, you are making it easier for your body to handle the stress it is going to endure. It also has the potential to improve your healing time and result - a complete win-win.

## + A SOFT-FOODS DIET APPROACH

#### Once you undergo your surgical procedure, your approach to food may have to change for several days, or even weeks.

In order for your mouth to adequately heal, you should be putting minimal pressure on the mouth and teeth during the eating process. At the same time, however, for your body to be able to properly repair itself, you will need a comprehensive array of vitamins, minerals, and proteins, and the best way to obtain them is through foods.

Traditionally, medical and dental professionals would recommend that a patient eat soft foods after a procedure, and you probably have an image of a hospital meal – with Jell-O, puddings, and cups of juice.

The problem is these foods are void of any nutrition, are loaded with sugar, and can actually make it harder for your body to heal! A holistically minded, whole foods approach combined with a soft-foods approach will allow you to nourish your body in a way that can aid healing times and help you achieve your best result surgically.

By eating a variety of foods, you ensure that your body is obtaining maximal nutrients to fight inflammation and promote healing.

## A few general guidelines to follow include:

- Avoid anything too hot your mouth just underwent trauma. The heat will cause additional inflammation in the short term. Allow all hot drinks (coffee, tea, etc.) and soups to cool to a warm as opposed to hot temperature.
- 2. Do not use a straw when drinking the suction in your mouth when using a straw can dislodge any blood clots that have formed in your mouth.
- 3. Crunchy snacks this should be obvious, but crunchy foods have sharp corners, which can interfere with the wound in your mouth by scratching the tissue, or worse, getting lodged into the wound site.
- 4. Anything too spicy while some spice can help the body speed up healing time by increasing blood flow, stay away from anything too spicy for the first few days after your surgery. The compounds that create the heat in spicy food can irritate the wound site and cause physical discomfort as well.



#### Once you undergo your surgical procedure, your approach to food may have to change for several days, or even weeks.

If you are looking for a few quick and simple store-bought items to start off with, that's great. General guidelines to begin with:

- 1. Choose organic whenever possible. Your body is healing right now, and keeping potential chemicals out of the body can only help improve your healing time.
- 2. Read labels. Try to keep sugar and salt content as low as possible.
- 3. Count ingredients, not calories. Your body needs calories to be able to heal. It doesn't need too many ingredients, especially ones that you can't pronounce or picture.

# Some simple food ideas from the grocery store:

- Applesauce
- Baby Food
- Cottage cheese
- Couscous
- Hummus, guacamole, and other dips
- Ice cream
- Nut butter (smooth)
- Oatmeal
- Organic tofu
- Polenta
- Rice puddings / congee
- Risotto
- Sauerkraut
- Simple soups and broths
- Smoothies
- Soft, organic cheese
- Yogurt



## **PA NUTRITION**

Your Smile. Our Specialty.

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