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SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE & CONSENT

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS REGARDING POSSIBLE CHANGES IN SENSATIONS OF THE LIP, CHIN, OR TONGUE FOLLOWING DENTAL SURGERY.

Dental surgery, like any other surgery, has certain inherent risks and limitations that may occur despite the experience and skill of the doctor. Following your surgery, it is possible that you may experience either temporary or permanent changes in the sensation or feelings of your lip, chin, or tongue. Permanent changes in sensation of the affected areas are extremely rare.

WHAT CAN CAUSE IT?

Because the nerves that supply these regions are close to the area where the surgery is performed, the nerves may not function normally for a while afterwards. These nerves affect sensation only and not movement.

The most common cause of this type of injury is from the pressure that can occur during either the removal of a tooth root or by the placement of an implant in the lower jaw. Occasionally, hooks or curves on the root may tear some of the nerve fibers. Another possible cause of injury is during the administration of the local anesthesia (numbing medicine). X-rays are helpful but cannot tell us the exact location of the important structures. When the nerve is especially close to the site of the surgery, it could be nicked or cut. Additionally, the incidence and severity of nerve injuries increases with age. This is particularly true for lower wisdom teeth. Further, sometimes sensation is affected without knowing exactly what caused it.

HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The likelihood that a change in sensation will occur and how long it will last can depend on many factors, including position of the tooth, the nerve, or the difficulty of the procedure. The duration of the condition is unpredictable and different in each case. It may last a few days, weeks, or months, and in very rare instances, may be permanent. In the majority of cases, the sensory loss gradually returns to normal although you may not be aware of any immediate improvement. Nerve tissue is the slowest tissue in the body to heal, and it can be weeks or months before you notice significant improvements. Nonetheless, it is important for you to stay in touch with us, so we may advise you of your specific circumstances.

HOW CAN I TELL IF I AM GETTING BETTER?

During nerve recovery, you may notice changes such as tingling, as if a local anesthetic is wearing off. Other sensations may also be present. Do not be alarmed; this is often a positive sign. It is important for you to help us in recording any changes in your symptoms so that we may better answer your questions and advise you as to your prognosis.

WHAT IF IT DOESN'T GET BETTER? CAN ANYTHING BE DONE?

If there has been absolutely no improvement in six weeks, then depending on your case, microsurgical repair could be considered. We can further council you on this possibility, and you will be referred to a specialist who is experienced and knowledgeable in this area.

IN SUMMARY

Remember, in the overwhelming number of instances of altered sensation, all or most of the normal sensation will return. If residual symptoms do remain, the risks involved with surgical repair may not be warranted, in that spontaneous, post-operative recovery may take up to two years to occur. By keeping in close contact with us, we are better able to advise you throughout your recovery process to insure optimum results.

_____ _____ _____
Patient's Name (printed) Signature of Patient (or Patient's Guardian) Date

WITNESS:_____ DATE:_____

WITNESS:_____ DATE:_____

SIGNATURE OF DR. GREENE:_____ DATE:_____