

Post-Operative Oral Surgery Instructions

Following any oral surgery procedure,(extractions, gum, bone surgery and/or biopsies)... there are several important instructions for you to follow to insure proper healing and to avoid problems.

Please read and follow these items carefully.

1. **NUMBNESS: For several hours after a dental procedure your cheeks, tongue, lips will be numb!**
DO NOT bite/chew on your cheeks, tongue and/or lips, for you cannot feel these numb areas and may damage the cheeks, tongue and lips! To minimize the possibility of chewing on their cheeks, tongue and/or lips – **DO NOT** eat for several hours or until the numbing effects are gone!
2. **NO SMOKING, SUCKING or HARD SPITTING UNTIL AREA IS COMPLETELY HEALED-** This includes no sucking through straws, on candy, or anything else! Smoking, sucking or hard spitting will remove the blood clot that is needed to heal the surgical area. **Removal of the blood clot may delay healing, cause pain and increase the chance of infection and/or dry socket. Dry Sockets are extremely painful and there is little to nothing that can be done to treat them. Only time heals a dry socket!**
3. **Bleeding** - Some bleeding and oozing is expected, and this may continue to up to 24 hours. Bite on gauze for 1 hour. Change to fresh gauze each hour as long as bleeding continues. Be sure gauze is placed directly over the site of bleeding, and firmly bite to apply pressure. A moistened tea bag may be substituted for gauze if bleeding persists after 4 to 5 gauze changes. Tea contains tannic acid which is a natural blood clotter! **If excessive bleeding continues after several gauze changes (1 hour intervals) call your dentist immediately or go directly to the emergency room!**
4. **Pain** - Following any oral surgical procedure, you may experience pain and discomfort when the local anesthetic has worn off. If significant discomfort is anticipated, pain medication will be prescribed (otherwise Ibuprofen or tylenol will suffice). If the patient should immediately take pain relief medication within 2 hours of surgery, prior to the numbness wears off. Some liquids should be taken with the medication and repeat doses taken as prescribed. Drowsiness often is caused by narcotic pain medication, so caution by the patient should be used in his or her activities. A patient taking narcotic pain killers should never operate any vehicle or heavy machinery of any kind. If you have a medical condition that doesn't allow you to take Ibuprofen or tylenol then consult your dentist.
The doctor will give you an adequate amount and strength of prescription pain medication as he/ she feels necessary. **NO PAIN MEDICATION REFILLS WILL BE GIVEN OVER THE PHONE. NO PAIN MEDICATION WILL BE REFILLED AFTER HOURS OR ON HOLIDAYS. YOU MUST BE SEEN BY THE DOCTOR AND BE RE-EVALUATED TO THE REASON WHY THE PAIN OR INFECTION IS PERSISTENT.**
5. **Swelling**- This also is a normal event following surgery and will reach a maximum in about 72 hours. Head elevation on 2 to 3 pillows will help minimize the swelling. Ice packs (ice wrapped in a dishcloth) should be applied for the first 12 hours ONLY. Care must be taken not to freeze the skin during this time.
6. **Nausea**- Many patients will experience nausea and vomiting soon after surgery. This is due to pain medications or small amount of swallowed blood. Clear liquids such as ginger ale, 7-up, sprite, soup broth should be taken in small sips and this may need to be repeated if vomiting continues. If nausea has not decreased by the following day, notify the doctor.
7. **Oral Care** - Do not spit or rinse mouth for 24 hours after surgery. **Gentle** oral rinsing with 1 teaspoon of salt in a 8oz. Glass of warm water should be done 6 to 10 times a day for 1 week. A clean mouth promotes good healing. The teeth must be kept clean by brushing with a soft toothbrush 2 to 3 times daily. Avoid the surgical site, but clean the teeth near the area carefully.
8. **Diet** -- Proper nutrition is important to assure rapid and effective healing. Immediately after surgery, the patient should have liquids only (warm soup, juice, milk, soft drinks) for 4 to 6 hours. No chewing should be done until the numbness is entirely gone. When feeling has returned soft foods (cooked vegetables, scrambles eggs or other foods of similar consistency) may then be given. Beginning the next day, the diet may then be advanced gradually to regular foods as the patient tolerates. Sharp foods (potato chips, tortilla chips, popcorn ect.) should be avoided for at least 1 week.
9. **** If excessive bleeding continues after several gauze changes (1 hour intervals), or if pain/ swelling has not decreased after the 3rd day, or if you have difficulty breathing or swallowing... call your dentist immediately and/or go directly to the emergency room!**