



DIXIE ORAL MAXILLOFACIAL & IMPLANT SURGERY

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BOARD CERTIFIED, AMERICAN BOARD OF ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

ST. GEORGE OFFICE: 1308 East 900 South, Unit A, St. George, UT 84790 435-673-1554

CEDAR CITY OFFICE: 415 N. Main, Ste. 204, Cedar City, UT 84721 435-867-1474

CARE FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

Proper care of the mouth following most surgical procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area.

1. **Protection of the blood clot** – To stop the bleeding, maintain firm pressure by biting on the gauze pack that has been placed over the surgical area. Make sure the gauze is over the extraction site(s) and you are not biting on the gauze with your teeth. Keep steady firm pressure for 45 minutes. Change gauze pack as needed until the bleeding stops. It is not uncommon to have blood-tinged saliva for the first 24 hours. If bright red bleeding continues after 4 hours, moisten a Lipton black tea bag, squeeze out excess water, and place tea bag directly over extraction site. Apply firm pressure for 45 minutes.
2. **Swelling** – Expect the swelling to peak 48 to 72 hours following surgery. To help minimize swelling, keep your head elevated at a 30 degree angle while resting.
3. **Ice packs** – Apply an ice pack to the cheek or jaw by the extraction site— 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off— for the first 24 to 72 hours.
4. **Do not rinse, brush or spit** for 24 hours. Do not use a straw for 3 days. The motion of straw use can dislodge the blood clot and cause bleeding and in some instances a dry socket. Also, do not use mouthwash for 72 hours; the alcohol in the mouthwash can irritate the surgical site and slow the healing process. Resume brushing after 24 hours with a standard toothbrush. Be careful not to irritate the surgical site(s) with the toothbrush.
5. **Warm salt water rinses** – After 24 hours, mix $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt with 4 oz. warm water. Gently rinse thoroughly with the salt water, especially around the extraction sites, and spit out. Do this 4-5 times a day, especially after meals. Continue salt water rinses for 7 days. Do not purchase a syringe to irrigate the extraction sites. You run the risk of flushing out a blood clot before it is properly formed. We will give you a syringe at your follow-up visit if it is needed.
6. **Discomfort** following surgical procedures is normal and to be expected. Take **pain medication** as prescribed and as needed. Medication and some anesthetics may cause drowsiness, lack of awareness and coordination. Therefore you should not operate a vehicle, hazardous devices or make legal decisions while taking such medications and/or drugs or

until fully recovered from the effects of same. Completely finish any antibiotics if prescribed. However, if a fever or excessive swelling or rash is noticed, call our office.

7. **If you had IV anesthesia, you cannot drive a vehicle for 24 hours. Your escort should remain with you for the remainder of the day.**
8. **Eating** adequate food and fluid intake following surgery and/or general extractions is important. We recommend a liquid diet for the first 24 hours (milkshakes, smoothies, jello, pudding, yogurt, etc), then a soft diet for the following 3-4 days. If desired, you may supplement your diet with liquids such as Carnation Instant Breakfast which will provide you with the proper nutrition. You should also avoid rice and other small particles that may irritate the surgical sites.
9. **Sleep Apnea** patients who use a CPAP should continue the use of their CPAP whenever sleeping.
10. **Avoid** all excessive activity for 5 days. Don't pick at the surgical area. Avoid all alcoholic beverages while taking pain medications. **DO NOT SMOKE** until healing is well established – 1 week minimum. This includes E-cigarettes.
11. **Sutures**, if they were used, will normally dissolve or fall out within 3 – 7 days depending upon the type of suture used. It is important to keep your post-operative appointment to ensure proper healing.
12. **Allergic reactions** (e.g.: rash, itching, etc.), **CALL IMMEDIATELY!**
13. **Do not hesitate to call if any questions arise. The doctors are available 24 hours.**

We hope these instructions will aid your healing from your surgical procedure. Our office telephone numbers are listed below for your convenience. If you are calling after hours, our live answering service will take your call and then contact the doctors with the pertinent information for them to call you back.

St. George: 435-673-1554 or Cedar City: 435-867-1474
After office hours, please call the St. George office or toll free 1-800-731-1554