



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: WISDOM TEETH REMOVAL

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Discomfort after oral surgery is normal. To best manage your discomfort, please take the prescribed pain medications on schedule per the directions provided. Staying on top of a regular schedule will best minimize discomfort after oral surgery. If you are still experiencing significant discomfort despite the medications, please contact our office.

Gauze pad(s) should be placed directly over the extraction site(s) and held in place with firm biting pressure; proper placement will help you not swallow blood, which can make you nauseated. Replace the gauze pad(s) every 30-45 minutes. When the gauze pads have little or no blood on them, they are no longer necessary. The amount of bleeding will vary from person to person. Most of your bleeding will slow within 4-6 hours, but a small amount of bleeding is common for up to 24 hours.

Do not rinse on the day of surgery; it may prolong your bleeding. Begin gentle saltwater rinses the day after surgery and continue for 1 week. Rinse with warm saltwater 2-3 times each day and gently spit. To make the saltwater solution, dissolve a 1 teaspoon of salt in an 8-ounce glass of warm tap water. If prescribed Peridex®, please use 48 hours after surgery by gently rinsing in the morning and at night every day for 1 week. Please follow the instructions on the label.

If you have been given an irrigating syringe, start irrigation on the fifth day following surgery. Fill the syringe with warm salt water, and gently place the tip of the syringe into the extraction site to clean. Do this 3 times a day after meals until surgery sites are fully closed, which may take up to 4-6 weeks.

Swelling is normal after surgery and is a major cause of post-extraction discomfort. Swelling typically peaks by the third day and then starts to resolve; it can be reduced by the use of an ice pack. Apply the ice pack to one side of your face for 20 minutes; transfer it to the opposite side for another 20 minutes. Continue icing the face for the first 24-36 hours. Do not freeze the skin, do not sleep with the ice packs on overnight. Ice packs are useful for the first 24 hours only. Also, keep your head elevated on 2 pillows for 3-4 days. These measures will not eliminate swelling, but they will help to reduce its severity.

For the first 24 hours start with clear liquids, such as apple juice, tea, or broth. Gradually ramp up your diet as tolerated. Always cool down any hot foods or liquids during the first 24 hours. You should eat only soft foods for the first week (for example, soups, eggs, mashed potatoes, and meatloaf). If you were sedated for surgery, do not eat fatty, creamy, or oily foods; these foods may cause nausea. To help prevent dry socket, do not use a straw for the first 3 days after surgery.

Begin brushing your teeth the day after surgery. It is important to brush all of your teeth, even if the teeth and gums are sensitive. Bacterial plaque and food accumulation near the extraction site(s) will delay healing.

Do not smoke for at least 1 week. Smoking will increase your bleeding; the nicotine and tar in tobacco impair healing and may cause a dry socket.

Unless told otherwise, do not engage in vigorous physical activity for 3 days following your surgery. Physical activity increases your blood pressure, which will cause an increase in your swelling, pain, and bleeding. You may gradually increase your activity, such as jogging or tennis, 5-7 days after your surgery.

It is our desire that your recovery is as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call our office.