



Post-Operative Instructions: General

Bleeding

Slight oozing or blood-tinged saliva is not uncommon for the first 12–24 hours. Excessive or continued bleeding may be controlled by first wiping any old clots from your mouth and then placing a new gauze pad over the area with firm biting pressure. If bleeding continues, you may bite on a moistened tea bag.

Sutures

Sutures may be placed to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. The sutures dissolve within the week after surgery, unless you had non-resorbable sutures.

Swelling

Most swelling will not reach its maximum until 48–72 hours postoperatively. Swelling and discomfort may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Ice packs should be placed on for 20 minutes, then removed for 20 minutes, for the first 2–3 days after surgery.

Pain

Take the prescribed pain medication before you begin to feel discomfort. It is recommended to take the pills with food or drink. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery while medicated. It is also best to avoid alcoholic beverages. Aspirin or other over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®/Motrin®) may be used when appropriate. Discomfort following surgery may increase on the second or third day following the procedure.

Bruising

This is a normal post-operative occurrence that may occur 2–3 days after the procedure and take 1–2 weeks to gradually fade away.

Diet

It is best to wait until after the local anesthetic has completely worn off before beginning to eat. You may eat anything soft and cool the first day by chewing away from the extraction site. Do not use straws, spit, or smoke, as this may encourage more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot. Do not drink hot fluids or eat hot foods the first day. Avoid hard, crunchy foods that may disturb the area.

Oral Hygiene

Begin gentle, warm salt water rinses ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water) the morning after your surgery. Rinsing 4–5 times a day for several days, especially after meals, will help to gently flush away food particles. Continue to brush your teeth as best as you can, remembering to stay away from the surgical sites for several days. Be sure to keep the surgical areas clean to promote better healing.

Antibiotics

If you have been placed on an antibiotic, take as directed until gone. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or any other unfavorable reaction and notify our office immediately.

Nausea and Vomiting

In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, do not take anything by mouth for at least 30 minutes, including prescribed medicines. Taking an over-the-counter diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) may stave off mild nausea. Start again with bland fluids (water, ginger ale, 7UP®, Sprite®), sipping them slowly over a 15-minute period.

Activities

It is best to avoid strenuous activity for a day or two following your extraction, as this may cause the extraction site to start bleeding again. We strongly recommend avoiding tobacco products for at least 7 days following surgery.