



Post-Operative Instructions

It is essential to follow these instructions carefully for a smooth recovery process. These guidelines will help you care for your surgical sites, manage pain or bleeding, and more.

HILL & IOPPOLO

Keep gauze in place directly over the surgical sites and bite with firm pressure. Change the gauze every 60 minutes as needed for 4-6 hours following surgery. To fold the gauze, roll it into thirds lengthwise, then fold it into thirds again to make a small ball before placing it over the surgical site. Lightly dampen the gauze after folding it. Blood is sticky, and dry gauze can stick to the surgical area. Once the bleeding has slowed and there is little to no blood on the gauze, you may leave the gauze out. A small amount of bleeding mixed with saliva is normal.

Do not spit, rinse, or swish forcefully on the day of surgery, as this can prolong bleeding and disturb the blood clot. **To help prevent dry socket, do not use a straw, smoke, vape, drink carbonated beverages, blow up balloons, play wind instruments, or swish with mouthwash for 1 week following surgery.**

Please **discontinue the Peridex mouthwash you used prior to surgery for 1 week**, until your follow-up appointment, unless the doctor tells you otherwise.

You may have **stitches in your mouth. These will dissolve on their own, usually within the week.**

If you had lower extractions, start using the curved-tip syringe on the third night, 2 days after surgery. Fill the syringe with warm salt water and gently rinse the lower sockets after eating and before bed. Continue using the syringe every time you eat and then before bed until the surgical sites completely close. If you did not receive a syringe on the day of surgery, one may be given at your post-op visit.

If you were prescribed an antibiotic, take it as directed until it is gone.

Discomfort is normal after extractions. For pain, you may take Aleve as directed with a meal, three times a day for the first two days. Aleve is preferred over Advil. If you are still having pain, you may also take Tylenol in addition to the Aleve as needed, unless the doctor instructed otherwise. Our office is a narcotic-free practice, and narcotic pain medications are not indicated after routine oral surgical procedures.

Stick to soft foods for the first week, such as mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, mac and cheese, yogurt, soup, meatloaf, or **anything soft enough to mash with a fork**. Drink plenty of fluids, but drink from a cup, not a straw. For 3 weeks, avoid hard, crunchy, or very chewy foods such as pizza crust, steak, jerky, nuts, popcorn, chips, and hard breads.

Swelling is normal after surgery and is often the main cause of discomfort. Swelling usually peaks around the third day and then begins to improve. **Use ice packs for the first 24 hours.** Apply ice in 10-minute intervals. After the first day, you may switch to heat if desired.

Begin brushing all teeth as normal the day after surgery, be gentle around surgical sites.

Avoid vigorous physical activity following your procedure. You may gradually return to activities such as jogging, sports, or workouts about 7 days after surgery as tolerated.

Some swelling, soreness, bruising, jaw stiffness, and trouble opening are normal after oral surgery. Call the office if you have heavy bleeding that does not slow down, severe pain that is not improving, swelling that worsens after several days, fever, rash, difficulty breathing, or anything that concerns you.

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