



Postoperative Instructions: General

Care of the mouth after surgery has an important effect on healing. Swelling, discomfort, and restricted jaw function are expected. These may be minimized by the following instructions. Please read them carefully. It is strongly recommended that they be followed.

HEMORRHAGE CONTROL

Remove the gauze pack upon arriving home. Slight oozing is expected. If the bleeding is excessive, place a roll of sterile gauze, or a moistened tea bag, over the wound and bite firmly for 30 minutes with constant pressure. Assume a semi-upright position, using 2 pillows. Avoid spitting and drinking through a straw. Spitting and using a straw causes bleeding by drawing at the origin.

PAIN AND INFECTION CONTROL

Take all medications as prescribed or as needed for pain. Ibuprofen or Tylenol® may be adequate for pain control; if not, contact the office. Warning: Do not drive or operate mechanical equipment after taking pain medication.

SWELLING CONTROL

Apply an ice pack to the jaw immediately upon your return home, 20 minutes on, and 20 minutes off. Do this for 48-72 hours while awake.

DIET

A liquid or soft food diet high in vitamins and protein is advised for 3 days. Increase your fluid intake during the initial one- to two-week postoperative period. Resume your normal diet as soon as possible. Stay away from hard crunchy foods for 2 weeks. Stay away from chewy foods (e.g., gum) for 1 week.

NAUSEA

A small amount of carbonated drink (e.g., 7Up® or ginger ale) every hour for 5 or 6 hours will usually alleviate nausea. Follow this with mild tea, clear soup, and other clear liquids. Avoid dairy products if experiencing nausea. If nausea continues, contact the office; the doctor can help you.

ORAL HYGIENE

The teeth should be brushed, but avoid the site of surgery for the first 2 days. The day following surgery, the mouth may be rinsed gently with warm salt water (½ teaspoon of salt in a large glass of warm water) after each meal and at bedtime. Smokers are advised not to smoke for 1–2 weeks after surgery.



Postoperative Instructions: General (Cont.)

The removal of impacted wisdom teeth and other surgical procedures may be quite involved and difficult. The following conditions may occur, all which are expected:

- 1) The surgical site will usually swell. The swollen area may become quite large.
- 2) Stiffness of the muscles may cause difficulty in opening the mouth. You may have a slight earache. A sore throat may develop.
- 3) Numbness around the corners of the mouth on the side from which the tooth was removed may develop. This is called paresthesia and is most often a temporary condition that will usually correct itself. It may remain anywhere from a few days to several weeks.
- 4) Your other teeth may ache temporarily. This is called sympathetic pain and is a temporary condition.
- 5) If the corners of the mouth are stretched, they may dry and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with cream or ointment such as Vaseline® Lip Therapy.
- 6) There will be a cavity where the tooth was removed. The area should be rinsed following meals with warm salt water or mouthwash. This space will be gradually filled in with new tissue.
- 7) Black and blue discoloration may occur on the outside of the face near the area of surgery. This occurrence is not unusual and will resolve within a few days.
- 8) There may be a slight elevation of temperature for 24–48 hours. If an elevated temperature continues, notify this office.
- 9) Sutures (stitches) may be used to close the surgical wound. They will be removed at a subsequent office visit.