



Post-Operative Instructions: Oral Surgery

Care of your mouth after surgery has an important effect on healing. Swelling, discomfort, and restricted jaw function are expected and should not cause alarm. These may be minimized by following the instructions below. Please read them carefully. It is strongly urged that they be followed. Please note that there is no charge for your post-operative care in this office!

Bleeding

Remove the gauze pack(s) after 1 hour. **Do not rinse, spit, use straws, smoke, or brush your teeth for the first 24 hours!** Spitting or sucking causes bleeding to continue. Slight bleeding is expected for the first day. If bleeding is excessive, place a folded gauze pad or a moistened tea bag over the wound and bite firmly for 30 minutes with constant pressure. Assume a semi-upright position using a couple of pillows.

Pain and Infection

Take your medications as directed on the package. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medications and contact our office. Do not drive or operate mechanical equipment after taking prescription pain medication.

Swelling

Apply an ice pack—20 minutes on and 20 minutes off—to the jaw immediately upon returning home and change it frequently. Continue this on and off for 24–48 hours. Peak swelling should occur between the second and third day postoperatively and diminish slowly thereafter.

Nausea

Do not take narcotic prescription pain medication on an empty stomach! Small sips of a carbonated drink will usually terminate nausea. Follow this with mild tea or clear soup, and then easily digestible foods like toast or Jell-O. Avoid greasy foods and milk products. Over-the-counter Dramamine® can be taken to reduce the nausea. If nausea continues, contact our office.

Oral Hygiene

The day following surgery, the mouth may be rinsed gently with a warm saltwater solution (½ teaspoon salt per half glass of lukewarm water) after each meal and at bedtime. Do not use hydrogen peroxide rinses. The teeth should be brushed, but avoid the site(s) of surgery.

Smoking

Smoking can cause bleeding and delay healing. Smokers are advised not to smoke for 3 days following surgery.

Rest

Avoid overexertion and get adequate rest. Avoiding sports, exercise, and strenuous activity for at least 2–3 days is generally recommended.



Post-Operative Instructions: Oral Surgery (Cont.)

Dental Care

It is usually best to avoid routine or elective dental care (including orthodontic or hygiene visits) for approximately 2 weeks after surgery unless your doctor has advised otherwise.

Infection

Signs of infection include increased pain and swelling after 3 days, redness, warmth, drainage of pus, foul smell, and fever. If these occur, contact our office.

Post-Operative Visits

If you have been given an appointment for post-operative care, please return to the office as scheduled. If you are experiencing problems or have questions, we can usually arrange a post-operative visit on short notice. Please note that there are no additional charges for post-operative care visits.

If emergency care is necessary after normal office hours, please call the office number to reach our answering service: (520) 745-2454.