



Post-Operative Instructions: Jaw Surgery

- 1. GO TO YOUR NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE BREATHING!**
2. Notify our office if you have increasing drainage from your incision or recurring fever (>101.5 F) for more than 12 hours.
3. Facial swelling will increase for the first 48–72 hours. Apply ice packs (20 minutes on/20 minutes off) and keep your head elevated (extra pillow or recliner). Most of the swelling will resolve within the first few weeks; however, healing will continue for 4–6 months.
4. Bruising may occur after a few days. In some cases, the bruising may extend onto your upper chest.
5. You may shower without restriction.
6. **NO SMOKING!!!**
7. Avoid alcoholic beverages.
8. Brush the teeth gently with a child size soft bristle brush (no other substitutes). You may use tooth paste. Your gums will have reduced sensation. Be careful not to injure the gums while brushing.
9. Use saltwater rinses (8 ounces of warm water with a ½ teaspoon of salt) after meals, and before bedtime.
10. If the teeth are rubber banded together, please try to limit your jaw motion. The rubber bands may be cut with scissors in case of a true breathing emergency (notify the doctor afterward).
11. If you are given an antibiotic, it should be taken as directed.
12. The pain medication can be taken every 4–6 hours as needed.
13. While the teeth are rubber banded, meals may include liquids such as juice, broth, milk products (including soy, rice), and liquid supplements (instant breakfast, Boost®, Ensure®). **No chewing.** Your doctor will advise you when it is safe to begin chewing. Most large pharmacies carry a variety of supplements in different flavors. It is generally easier to sip directly from a cup, but you may use a straw if you like. You should try to have 4–6 meals a day to be sure that you are receiving ample nutrition and hydration.
14. **DO NOT LIE IN BED ALL DAY.** This can lead to pneumonia and blood clots. Light activity is acceptable, even good. Try to be out of bed during the daytime.
15. **YOU SHOULD NOT DRIVE IF YOU ARE TAKING PAIN MEDICATION.**
16. Please notify your doctor if you feel that your bite has shifted.
17. You can call Fresno Oral and Maxillofacial surgery (559) 226-2722 for any questions or concerns.

In addition to the above, for UPPER JAW SURGERY patients:

Nasal congestion and minor nosebleed are expected. You may sniff back or wipe the nose, **but do not blow.** You may use saline nasal spray to loosen clots and mucous. Afrin® Nasal Spray may be used for severe congestion, but no more than two consecutive days.



Post-Operative Instructions: Jaw Surgery (Cont.)

POST SURGICAL AFTERCARE – FOLLOW-UP AFTER SURGERY

- We understand that the first week after surgery can be difficult. Although the swelling peaks at 2–3 days after surgery, it doesn't really start to come down until after the first week. At 2 weeks after surgery, usually 70% of the swelling has resolved. For the final swelling and numbness to resolve, it will take weeks to months after surgery. It is not unusual to be more swollen or numb on one side vs. the other.
- One week after surgery, you will follow up with your oral surgeon. If you need to be seen sooner, it will not be a problem. At one week, the swelling should be starting to come down. You should still be on a liquid diet at this point.

- **Splint**

In rare cases, a splint is left in after surgery. If this is the case, your doctor will remove it 1–2 weeks after surgery.

- **6 weeks**

You can blow your nose 6 weeks after surgery. We will again assess your bite and change the elastic pattern if needed.

- **8 weeks**

Typically, you may begin chewing food 8 weeks after surgery.