



Post-Operative Instructions: Biopsy and Exposure

These are general instructions and not all of these instructions may apply to your recovery. Common sense will often dictate what you should do; however, when in doubt, follow these guidelines or call our office at any time for clarification.

Swelling

Swelling from oral surgery is normal and reaches its maximum in 48 hours. Keeping the head elevated with 2 pillows when lying down can minimize facial swelling. Swelling can also be minimized by applying cold compresses to your face every hour (30 minutes on, 30 minutes off) for the first 48 hours. After 48 hours, warm compresses will help reduce the swelling. These should be continued (30 minutes on, 30 minutes off) until the swelling has subsided.

Rinsing

Avoid rinsing the mouth for 24 hours after surgery. It may disturb the clot. The following day, you may begin gently rinsing with warm (not hot) salt water. Dilute 1 teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water and rinse gently 3 or 4 times a day for 1 week.

Diet

No spicy or acidic foods. During the first 24 hours, eat cool/room temperature soups and soft foods that are easily chewed and swallowed. Hot foods will promote bleeding. You may gradually progress to solid foods over the next few days. Do not skip meals. By eating nutritious meals regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort, and heal faster. Take any prescribed food supplement as directed. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal diet and take medication as usual.

Pain

Unfortunately, most oral surgery procedures are accompanied by some degree of discomfort. There are many good strategies to get you through the process, though. Some form of pain reliever should be taken before the numbness goes away. Over-the-counter medications like ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®), acetaminophen (Tylenol®), or aspirin are adequate if there are no allergies, they have been tolerated in the past, and they do not interfere with any other medications. For more involved procedures, a prescribed narcotic can be taken. The narcotic can also be alternated or taken in addition to ibuprofen if there are no allergies and has been tolerated in the past. Taking your medications with food will decrease the chance of nausea. Remember, narcotic pain medications will impair your judgment and reflexes, so driving and operating heavy machinery is to be avoided.