

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

This is meant to highlight some key post-operative care that will be helpful over the next few days. Remember that the height of discomfort is in the first 3 days and each day thereafter you will steadily feel better. Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply.

Day of Surgery

BITING PRESSURE IS IMPORTANT!! Some bleeding is to be expected. Keep constant, light pressure on the area of surgery by biting on the gauze that has been placed in your mouth for 30 minutes. If bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the site for another 30-60 minutes. You may also bite on a tea bag that has been soaked in hot water and squeezed to damp dry. Bite down for 20-30 minutes.

PAIN MEDICATION: Following surgery some discomfort is normal. If medications have been prescribed, take it as instructed. Generally Tylenol or Ibuprofen are adequate to minimize the discomfort you may experience the next few days. Continue to take any medications you normally take.

DO NOT DISTURB THE EXTRACTION SITE!! A protective blood clot forms during the first day. If it becomes disturbed or lost, extreme pain and/or infection may result. To prevent this please observe the following precautions.

DO NOT SPIT – if you do not wish to swallow unwanted fluids, drool into the sink.

Spitting may cause bleeding to restart

DO NOT SMOKE – or use chewing tobacco or snuff for at least 24 hours, longer if possible

DO NOT RINSE – or use mouthwash for the first 24 hours.

DO NOT DRINK THROUGH A STRAW.

AVOID ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES – or anything carbonated for 24 hours.

SWELLING can be minimized by wrapping a cold pack or frozen peas/corn in a towel. Apply to your face/ cheek for 20 minutes on / 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours. After the first 24 hours you will want to switch to moist heat, using a warm compress.

DIET: It is important not to skip meals. Stick to what is comfortable to eat and you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids during the first 24 hours after surgery

24 HOURS LATER

Begin gently rinsing with warm salt water (1/4 tsp salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water). Rinse with this solution 4 times a day for 6-8 days. This will help keep the surgical site clear of debris. Begin your normal oral hygiene routine within the bounds of comfort

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What can I eat?

Start with a soft food diet for a few days following surgery. Things like soup, bananas, mashed potatoes, and smoothies are great for allowing the surgical site to heal. Avoid crunchy, sharp or sticky foods that are hard or require a lot of chewing or things that contain small particles like seeds.

When can I brush my teeth and rinse?

It is okay to brush your teeth. You want to keep your mouth clean. You can begin to gently rinse after 24 hours with salt water.

What should my socket look like?

You will have temporary bleeding that leads to blood clot formation. This is the first step in healing. This healing clot will have a white appearance surrounded by tissue that is inflamed and darker red. As healing progresses, your gums should return to the color of the surrounding tissue.

What will happen with my sutures?

If sutures were placed they may begin to unravel after 2-3 days. This is normal. If loose ends are bothersome feel free to trim them yourself with scissors (don't tug) or call our office. Your sutures will dissolve on their own within 7-10 days.

How do I take my pain medication?

For moderate Pain a combination of Tylenol and Ibuprofen works well. For adults take up to 600mg of Ibuprofen, and 650 mg to Tylenol every 6 hours as needed for pain. Take your medications with food to avoid nausea. Staggering the pain medications can also be an effective strategy, the purpose of this is to maintain high levels of pain medication in your blood stream. Before the numbness wears off from your appointment you should start taking the pain medication.

For more intense pain

If Prescribed, start with narcotic (Vicodin, Lortab ect.)

3-4 hours later take 600 mg of the anti-inflammatory (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil)

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