

Post-Operative Instructions

BLEEDING:

1. Following surgery, some bleeding is expected. Bite firmly on the gauze for 45 minutes to one (1) hour, then discard. Replace as necessary folding the gauze into a tight roll. Do not talk while the gauze is in your mouth. Saliva may be tinted pink for up to 24 hours; it is advisable to use an old pillowcase the first night.
2. DO NOT spit, rinse or brush or teeth for 24 hours.
3. Do not use a straw for one week following surgery as this can increase bleeding and may increase your chances of getting a dry socket.
4. If bleeding begins again, place a small damp gauze pack directly over the tooth socket and bite firmly for one (1) hour. Repeat if necessary. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened, regular tea bag (do not use herbal or decaffeinated tea) for 30 minutes. No talking while gauze or tea bag is in mouth.
5. Keep your head elevated with several pillows or sit in a lounge chair.

DISCOMFORT:

1. Some discomfort is normal following oral surgery. Pain can be controlled, but may not be eliminated completely by taking the pain medication prescribed for you.
2. Start your prescriptions as soon as you get home – Do not delay. It is advisable to take medications with a small amount of food as some may cause nausea.
3. DO NOT drive or operate machinery while taking pain medication.
4. DO NOT drink alcohol while taking pain medication.

NOTE: Narcotic pain medication can only be prescribed during normal business hours. Please call early in the day as you may need to be seen by the doctor before additional medication can be prescribed.

SWELLING:

1. Swelling following oral surgery is normal. It reaches its maximum about 48 – 72 hours after surgery and can last four to six days.
2. The day of surgery, apply an ice pack to the face, over the surgical area immediately and continue for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off until bedtime. The day after surgery, please use a damp, warm washcloth or “moist heat” heating pad as a warm compress to help decrease discomfort and swelling.
3. Bruising is not unusual and often accompanies swelling.

DIET:

1. It is important to drink plenty of fluids. DO NOT use a straw the first week after surgery or drink carbonated beverages. Remove gauze before eating or drinking, then replace after you are done eating/drinking.
2. Eat as soon as possible after surgery. Start out with a little food. Soft foods such as yogurt, pudding, cottage cheese, eggs, pasta, jell-o, applesauce, grits and oatmeal may be the most comfortable the day after surgery.

NAUSEA:

1. Nausea can be minimized by proper placement of the gauze to decrease any swallowing of blood and eating a little soft food prior to taking medication. If nausea occurs, switch to clear liquids or ice chips before taking any else by mouth. Continue with the clear liquids or ice chips until the nausea subsides.

ORAL HYGIENE:

1. The day after surgery begin rinsing gently with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in 8 oz. of warm water) every four (4) hours.

2. The day after surgery, you may gently brush your teeth, but avoid the surgical area(s). Please DO NOT allow food to build up on your stitches.

3. NO SMOKING for *one week* following oral surgery.

REST:

1. Avoid strenuous activities for 48 hours following oral surgery.

BRUISING:

1. You may experience bruising in the area of the surgical site(s). This is a normal response and is not a cause for alarm. Bruising will slowly disappear in 7 to 14 days.

STIFFNESS:

1. Following oral surgery, you may experience jaw muscle stiffness and limited opening of your mouth. This is normal and usually improves in 5 to 10 days. Using warm compresses after the first 24 hours following surgery will help.

STITCHES:

1. In most surgery cases, the stitches placed at the surgery site(s) will be removed in 7 days or one week following your surgery at the post-operative appointment. If the stitches become loose or come out after some time, this is not a cause for concern. Some stitches may be uncomfortable following surgery; this is normal and salt water rinses will help.

2. Post-operative appointments are very important. It is essential to an uneventful recovery that these appointments are faithfully kept, no matter how good you may feel.

CALL THE OFFICE IF:

1. You have excessive bleeding that you cannot control by biting firmly on gauze for one hour.

2. You have increased swelling after the third day following oral surgery.

3. You have a fever.

4. You have any questions.

**In case of abnormal occurrence or emergency, please call the office at 631-7000.
Calls after office hours will be picked up by the answering service.
The answering service will notify the doctor on call.**