

JAW SURGERY

Surgery Date: _____ Place: _____ Arrival Time: _____

TWO WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Some medication can interfere with anesthesia and cause undesirable side effects that affect your surgery. Please discuss with your primary care physician if you are on any blood thinners. Aspirin should not be taken 1 week before or after surgery. Tylenol is a good medication to take for any aches or pains you may have prior to surgery.
2. Smoking will affect how you heal. It is very important to stop smoking 2-3 months before your surgery if possible.
3. If you develop a cold, facial sore or any other illness prior to surgery, please notify us.
4. If you are having surgery as an outpatient, please be sure arrangements have been made for a responsible adult to drive you to and pick you up after surgery and to stay with you for the first 24 hours.

EVENING BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Shampoo your hair and wash your face with mild soap and water for 3 full minutes. Do not use conditioner or hair spray after shampooing.
2. In preparation for after surgery, place two pillows for elevation of your head & shoulders on your bed.
3. Make some jello and/or soup for after surgery.
4. Get a good night's rest.
5. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight.

MORNING OF SURGERY: Be at the Surgery Center/Hospital at: _____

1. Do not eat or drink anything if your surgery is scheduled before noon. If your surgery is scheduled after noon, you may have coffee or tea and dry toast at least 6 hours before your surgery time.
2. Do not wear wigs, hairpins, hairpieces, jewelry, contact lenses, dentures, nail polish, or makeup. Dress in loose-fitting comfortable clothes. Do not wear pullover tops or panty hose. Wear slip on shoes.

3. Have someone drive you to your surgery and make certain someone will be available to take you home and stay with you for 24 hours. Put a pillow and blanket in the car for the trip home. Ladies should bring sunglasses and a scarf.

AFTER SURGERY:

1. After surgery, it is best for you to go to bed and keep your head elevated on 2 pillows.
2. Applying the iced gauze to your jaw, face and cheeks as much as possible for the first 24 hours will reduce the amount of swelling you will be after surgery.
3. If you have pain or discomfort from your jaw surgery take the pain medication every 4-6 hours as instructed. It is best to take pain medication with crackers, jello, etc. If you have no pain, do not take the medication. Alcohol and pain medications should not be taken together. Sedatives should be spaced so they do not interfere with other medications.
4. A light diet is best for the day of surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or jello. Continue a clear liquid diet for one day then a soft diet for 6-7 days. If your jaw is wired shut you will need to continue a liquid or soft diet for 3-4 weeks.
5. You can expect some bleeding from the stitch lines and swelling of the jaw and face. However, you should call the office if you have a continuous bloody drip, significantly more swelling on one side than the other, or any severe pain.
6. Vaseline or Antibiotic ointment can be applied to any facial wounds for 4 days as instructed. If surgical glue or "Dermabond" was used on your facial wounds do not apply any ointments for 5 days. At five days apply Vaseline sparingly until the glue releases fully from the wound.
7. If you have an incision in your mouth eat a clear diet for 24 hours and then a soft diet for 6-7 days. Use the mouthwash or quarter percent hydrogen peroxide four times a day as instructed for one week.

OTHER POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. On the day after surgery, expect significant swelling of the face. Often times patients experience numbness or facial weakness but this usually resolves with time. Use Hydrogen Peroxide for several days diluted in half with tap water to remove old blood and crust from the wound, face, and hair.

2. If your eyes burn or remain partially open when sleeping, apply the Refresh P.M. ointment inside the eyelid as long as needed. This will make your vision blurry but it will clear as the ointment is absorbed. Use Refresh Plus eye-drops during the day as needed to keep your eyes moist and comfortable.
3. The second day after surgery you can begin washing your face gently with a mild soap (Ivory or Neutrogena) and rinse it with water. It will not hurt to get water on the stitches or around your eyes.
4. Smiling, yawning, or pulling on the wounds or cheeks should be avoided for 1 week after surgery. This is especially important the first few days following removal of the stitches. Patients should brush their teeth gently after surgery avoiding oral wounds.
5. Strenuous activities should be avoided for 2 weeks. After that, gradually increase your activities so you are back to normal by the end of the third week.
6. After a few weeks, if you experience itching or discomfort, warm compresses will help relieve that feeling and sutures may become exposed needing to be removed.
7. If your wounds become red or irritated, or if you notice significant drainage or fever call our office.
8. If your jaw is wired closed keep wire cutters close in case of an emergency.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Drowsing and drainage often occurs after surgery. This will stop as the swelling goes away and the wounds heal.
2. Tightness of the jaw, eyelids, and cheek is a normal feeling after the surgery. This may make it hard to close the eyelids or mouth completely. This will usually relax with time. Numbness usually resolves in 4-6 months but may be permanent.
3. Red discoloration of the face or wounds may occur if there is a lot of swelling. This is usually not abnormal and will usually disappear completely in several weeks. This swelling may also cause the lower lip to pull away, but will subside as the swelling goes down.

4. Contacts can be worn when the eyes start feeling normal and the majority of the swelling has subsided. This is usually about 1 week after surgery. If it is necessary to pull down on your eyelid to insert them, they should not be worn for 10 days. Glasses can be worn until then. Dentures that are in proximity to the wound or irritate the area should be avoided for several weeks.
5. Cosmetics can be worn on the face as early as 3 days after surgery.
6. Strenuous activity/heavy lifting of objects greater than 10 lbs should be avoided for 6-8 weeks.
7. All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact is to be avoided and use the sunscreen with SPF 20 or greater for at least 6 months.
8. Please take all medication carefully and as directed. If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please call the office.
9. If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101), redness or increased pain at the surgical incisions, or the wound opens, please call us immediately.
10. If you have an incision in your mouth, eat a clear diet of fluids without much color or material. A soft diet should be undertaken for 5-6 more days in most cases and consist of soups, mashed potatoes, etc. Always rinse your mouth out after you eat. Try to eat away from the incision so that debris does not accumulate near the wound. Some patients with severe jaw fractures or who do not have surgery must maintain a soft diet for several months.
11. It is not infrequent for oral incisions open, but this can usually be managed with local wound care. If there is no infection the open wound will usually heal on its own in several weeks. Use the mouth wash as instructed by the surgeon to avoid infection.
12. Patients with significant jaw fractures may have mal alignment of their teeth following surgery. Often a dentist may need to adjust your bite. We recommend waiting 2 months before having a dentist adjust your bite. Often loose teeth or dead teeth require the expertise of a dentist after surgery.
13. Jaw fractures are often difficult to fix without problems such as injection or plate exposure. It is important to keep your surgeon informed of any

problems with the wound or signs of infection. Often patients require multiple operations following severe facial and jaw fractures.

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