



Oral Surgery Post-Operative Care Instructions

Please read these instructions carefully. Sometimes the after effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply to all patients. Follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification.

FIRST HOUR

Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change the gauze for the first hour unless the bleeding is not controlled. If active bleeding persists after one hour, place enough new gauze to obtain firm pressure over the surgical site for another 30-60 minutes. The gauze may be changed as necessary and may be slightly moistened and/or fluffed for more comfortable positioning. Always remove the gauze before drinking or eating.

PLEASE AVOID

Do NOT disturb the surgical area today. Do NOT rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects or your fingers. Do NOT smoke for a minimum of 72 hours, as this is extremely detrimental to the healing process. Do NOT drink through a straw or spit, as this will slow the healing process. Do NOT chew gum for two (2) weeks.

OOZING

Intermittent bleeding or oozing is normal. It may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the surgical area(s) and biting down firmly for 30-60 minutes.

STEADY BLEEDING

Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between your teeth rather than exerting pressure on the surgical site. Try repositioning fresh gauze packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a moistened tea bag wrapped in moist gauze for 20-30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

SWELLING

Often there is some swelling associated with oral surgery. You can minimize this by using a cold pack or ice bag wrapped in a towel and applied 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off during the first ten (10) hours after surgery. After ten (10) hours, it is best to switch from ice to moist heating pad, hot water bottle, moist towel (using a moistened wash cloth warmed in the microwave for 1-2 minutes or simply running hot water over the washcloth and applying to the area(s)).



DISCOMFORT

Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication. We suggest that the first dose be taken before the anesthetic has worn off to manage the discomfort better. Please remember to have a small amount of food in your stomach before taking the medication. Effects of pain medicines vary widely among individuals. If you do not achieve adequate relief, you may supplement each pill with an analgesic such as Ibuprofen. Some people may even require two (2) of the pain pills at one time during the early stages (but this may add to the risk of an upset stomach). Remember that the most severe discomfort is usually within the first six (6) hours after the anesthetic wears off, and after that, your need for pain medication should lessen.

NAUSEA

Nausea is not an uncommon event after surgery, and is sometimes caused by stronger paid medications. Preceding each pain pill with a small amount of food, then taking the pill with a large amount of water, may reduce nausea. Try to keep taking clear, non-carbonated fluids and minimize your pain medications. Call us if you do not feel better or if repeated vomiting is a problem.

DIET

It is important to maintain a healthy diet to promote healing, gain strength, and have less discomfort and feel better. For the first day or so, a soft diet will probably be more comfortable. Creamed soups, pudding, yogurt, milk shakes and pasta are good choices. The temperature of food does not matter but avoid extremely hot foods. Avoid foods like chips, nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may become lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you can progress at your own pace. Avoid carbonated beverages for 4-5 days. If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits as much as possible and follow your normal instructions regarding insulin schedules.

CLEANSING

No vigorous rinsing of your mouth should be performed on the day of surgery as this will dissolve and clotted blood and cause additional bleeding. Begin gently rinsing twenty-four (24) hours after surgery. Keeping your mouth clean following surgery is essential. Using one-quarter teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water, gently rinse your mouth at least three or four times daily, particularly after meals, for the next five (5) days. Begin your normal oral hygiene for brushing the day after surgery. Remember to be gentle. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing of all areas, but please make every attempt to clean your teeth.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call us at 480-551-0581.