

Postoperative Instructions

It is essential for the early healing process that the following instructions are observed during the first two weeks after operation. Some **pain, swelling or discomfort may be expected** after extractions or surgical procedures.

Bleeding

It is normal for the area to ooze off and on for 24 to 48 hours. You will be given gauze to help control bleeding.

Bite down on gauze with gentle pressure for thirty minutes until bleeding slows down.

Apply a second gauze for thirty minutes if the area is profusely bleeding. **Oozing is normal.**

If bleeding continues freely, place a moist tea bag over area for 30-45 minutes. The tannic acid in regular tea can help establish clot formation.

Swelling

It is normal to have some swelling and bruising after surgery. **Maximum swelling usually peaks 2 to 3 days following surgical procedure and will diminish rapidly after this time.**

Apply ice pack to the face over operated area for twenty minute intervals for the first 48 hours while awake. Place a washcloth between your face and ice pack, keeping ice pack elevated above the heart.

Keeping your head elevated with a couple of pillows will help reduce swelling.

Returning to normal activity will aid in reduction of swelling.

Medications

Antibiotics should be taken as directed.

Pain medication should be started **before the numbness from the local anesthesia wears off.**

Prescribed pain medications should be taken as directed. Ibuprofen can be used between doses of prescribed pain medication. If directed, you can take 600mg/800 mg every 8 hours.

Please refrain from consuming alcoholic beverages while taking prescription pain medication.

We advise having something to eat **and** drink before taking the pain medication to avoid the possibility of nausea.

Eating

Eating and drinking is essential to avoid post-operative complications such as nausea and vomiting.

Soft foods may be consumed as soon as the numbness from the local anesthesia wears off.

Avoid hard and crunchy foods.

Avoid hot peppers and foods with small seeds until healing is almost complete.

Drink plenty of fluids to avoid constipation or dehydration. Hydration will help reduce a low grade fever.

Oral Hygiene

You may start brushing your teeth the day after your surgery. Take care around the surgical area.

Refrain from using commercial mouthwashes unless instructed to do so by your doctor for two weeks.

Begin using warm salt water rinse after each meal starting the day after surgery. Mix 1 teaspoon of salt in 4 cups of water. Warm approximately ½ cup of the salt water and hold it in your mouth for 30-60 seconds. Swishing and gargling are not necessary. Continue rinses for two weeks.

It is recommended that you refrain from smoking for at least 72 hours, or if possible, up to two weeks after surgery for best results.

Avoid using water picks and/or electric toothbrushes.

Apply Chlorhexidine(Peridex) mouth rinse, if prescribed, to the surgical area with a gauze or painting with a Q-tip twice a day for two weeks.

Sutures

We normally use the type of suture material that will dissolve by itself. Do not be concerned if you notice loose sutures several days following your surgery.

If the suture is irritating your mouth, trim the excess suture with a small pair of scissors or remove the suture with a pair of tweezers. If at any time you are unsure, call our office.

Exercise

The lower jaw should be opened widely and stretched frequently to avoid stiffness and pain unless advised differently by staff. Continue for 1 week.

Avoid exercise such as jogging, jazzercise, zumba, weight lifting, playing a wind musical instrument for one week unless otherwise advised.

Special Considerations

Small fragments of bone may work its way to the surface as the area heals, this should cause no alarm. These areas are gradually absorbed or may need to be removed by our office staff.

Please call if the area is worrisome.

Occasionally, numbness of the lower lip may occur after the removal of lower teeth. Loss of sensation is usually temporary and most often returns. Please notify our office if persistent numbness is encountered.

A fever (temperature greater than 100.4) for 4 days after surgery is normal.

Sinus Communication

You may have mild to moderate facial/nose pain and a possible headache. If you experience a severe head ache not controlled with pain medication especially if combined with blurred vision, high fever, mental confusion or stiff neck, you should call our office.

It is normal to have blood-tinged mucus or saliva drainage and /or blood-tinged drainage from the nose for up to 72 hours.

Nasal blockage due to nasal swelling, clotting and debris can cause mild to moderate congestion.

FOR THE FIRST 10 DAYS FOLLOWING SURGERY, DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE. TRY TO SNEEZE WITH YOUR MOUTH OPEN. Try to avoid sneezing if at all possible.

ASK ABOUT THE USE OF A CPAP MACHINE IF YOU USE ONE.

It is not recommended to do any bending or lifting heavy items for the first week.

You can use saline nasal wash, which can be purchased at any pharmacy, to irrigate any debris from your nose. This can be done as much as every 20 minutes.

If you have a vigorous nose bleed that cannot be stopped with the use of ice/ saline and mild pressure, you should call our office.

Our interest in your case does not end with the completion of the operation. If after following these directions you still have severe pain, abnormal swelling or a temperature of 101° or greater, call the office for an appointment. Please call **(210) 696-7500** to reach our office. After hours, you will reach our answering service which will contact the doctor on call.

I have read, understand and received a copy of the postoperative instructions.

Patient or Guardian Signature _____

Date _____