

Post-Operative Instructions Following Oral Surgery

Following oral surgery, you should expect some swelling, discomfort, and stiffness. However, if you follow these instructions your post operative problems will be decreased.

Bleeding

Biting pressure over the surgical site is what controls bleeding. Before you leave the office gauze pads will be placed in your mouth. After 1-2 hours remove the gauze pads. If active bleeding has stopped do not replace them. Some oozing is normal for the first 24 hours.

The difference between oozing and bleeding is the amount of blood that is actively coming out of the socket. It is normal to have some blood in your saliva and a taste of blood in your mouth during the first 24 hours after the surgery.

If you are still bleeding, place the extra gauze pads carefully over the surgical site and again apply biting pressure. If "Jello" or "liver" clots are present wipe those away with a paper towel before placing additional gauze pads. The key here is the placement of the pads. If the pads are not directly over the surgical site so that they are applying pressure then the pads will not stop the bleeding. It is the direct pressure over the surgical site that stops bleeding. If bleeding continues apply a moistened tea bag over the area for 30 minutes with steady biting pressure. If you are still having difficulty please call.

Swelling

Apply ice packs to the outside of your face for the first 4-6 hours after the surgery. After the first six hours ice does not do much to reduce swelling. You will continue to have increased swelling for 36 hours after the surgery. If you wish to continue using the ice during this time it will not hurt anything but will accomplish little after the first 6 hours.

Pain

Make sure you fill the prescription if given one and take the pain medication as directed. **DO NOT INGEST ALCOHOL** with the pain medicine as this can cause a serious reaction.

Diet following surgery

You should go home and have something to drink. It is best to start out with clear liquids such as tea, 7 up, or apple juice. That evening most people feel comfortable with soups such as chicken soup. There are no strict limits. If you can eat more substantial foods without pain do so. Your comfort is the best guide as to what to eat. It is usually best to avoid milk and milk products for the first 24 hours. Milk combined with swallowed blood and the pain medication can cause nausea. If you are nauseated stay with the clear liquids and reduce your intake of narcotic pain medication.

General Care and Infection prevention

Care of your mouth is important. The best way to reduce the chance of a post operative infection is with good home care. Preventive antibiotics are not generally prescribed. If you had an acute infection and were prescribed antibiotics please take them until all the medication is consumed. Do not rinse out on the day of surgery as the bleeding might start again. Starting the next day, rinse very often with warm salt water and begin to brush your teeth. If you were given a prescription mouth wash use that in addition to the warm water rinses. Home care reduces the chance of a post-operative infection. The cleaner you keep the surgical site the better and quicker the healing process will be.

Post operative appointments:

After routine oral surgery a post operative check is always desirable but not required. If you are doing very well and have no postoperative problems it is not necessary for you to come in to be checked. If your surgery was complicated, (impacted wisdom teeth) make an appointment for a postoperative check 5-7 days after the surgery. If you have any questions please do not hesitate call the office.