

Important Instructions For Your Comfort Following Oral Surgery

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Press Option 1 (Available 24 Hours)

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Tooth removal and other oral surgical procedures are similar to any surgery; your own care in following the doctor's instructions speeds recovery. Please read and follow these directions carefully.

FIRST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS

Make sure someone stays with you and assists you!

- **DO NOT** rinse or spit for 24 hours. This prolongs bleeding and may disturb the blood clot. It is better to just swallow normally during this time.
- **ALLOW** gauze pads to remain in place for at least 30 minutes after leaving the office, maintaining constant biting pressure during this time; then remove the gauze and throw it away. If bleeding continues, replace it with another gauze sponge as provided.
 - Some bleeding is normal following oral surgery. If excessive bleeding occurs, fold a piece of sterile gauze as tightly as possible and place this **DIRECTLY** over the empty space from where the tooth was removed or on the point of bleeding and bite hard against the gum for 20-30 minutes.
 - Repeat if necessary.
- **DO NOT** rinse your mouth for 24 hours; however, continue to brush your teeth carefully.
- **AFTER 24 HOURS** in addition to your routine tooth brushing, use the prescribed Peridex mouth rinse to gently and carefully rinse three to four times a day.
- **DO NOT** use a straw.

Occasionally, a medicated dressing may be placed on the extraction site by the doctor. Try not to disturb this dressing.

NAUSEA & VOMITING

Occasionally patients may swallow blood in the recovery room or at home. This may cause nausea and/or vomiting. If this occurs, follow directions to stop bleeding and continue with a clean diet. Call us if the vomiting persists.

ACTIVITY

Make sure someone stays with you and assists you for the first 24 hours.

- **AVOID** all excessive activity.
- Don't pick at the surgical area.
- **DO NOT** drive or operate machinery for 24 hours after sedation or general anesthesia.
- **NO** spitting, drinking through a straw, or smoking for seven days!

AFTER USING COLD PACKS FOR 24 HOURS, SWITCH TO ELECTRIC HEAT

Impacted teeth and involved surgical procedures warrant immediate application of ice and particular attention to oral cleanliness.

- Apply an ice bag or cold application for 20 minutes; then, leave it off for five minutes.
- Repeat the icing procedure for 24-36 hours then switch to heat.
- For the first three or four nights, sleep with your head elevated 45 degrees.
- The ice packs we sent home with you today are reusable.
- Apply the heating pad on a medium setting continuously until the swelling resolves.

EATING

- **DO NOT** eat until the numbness has worn off to prevent biting your lip or tongue. Soft foods are advisable for at least 24 hours.
- Drink as much liquid as possible; fruit juices, milk, soft drinks, etc.
 - Ensure, or instant breakfast provides adequate calories and generous amounts of protein and is available in a variety of flavors in liquid, powder, or pudding forms.
- **DO NOT** eat chicken products for five days.
- **AVOID** crunchy products (i.e.: Chips).

LIP LUBRICANTS

Apply a liberal coating of Vaseline or lip lubricant containing lanolin to the lips and corners of the mouth to prevent forming of "cold sores" or lip cracks. Do not use Carmex.

COMMON PROBLEMS FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

DAYS ONE-FIVE

- **BLEEDING:** To control excessive bleeding the extra gauze pads or a tea bag that has been soaked in cool water for three minutes can be placed on the extraction site. Close teeth tightly for 20-30 minutes, maintaining pressure all the time. Swallow normally. If necessary, this can be repeated several times. Make sure that the gauze packs are placed behind the last teeth for wisdom teeth.
- **SWELLING:** Swelling following any surgical procedure is a normal event. This is particularly true of oral surgery and most certainly true when the surgery has involved the removal of an impacted tooth. It may vary from minimal to extensive and may persist for several days. **SWELLING DOES NOT MEAN THAT AN INFECTION HAS**

OCCURRED! Post-surgical infections in these procedures are extremely rare. Antibiotics are **NOT** indicated routinely and will be prescribed by this office if they are felt to be necessary. Your doctor may have given you a prescription to decrease swelling; take it as directed.

- **PAIN:** This is the most common postoperative problem. The medicine prescribed should make the pain tolerable, but not necessarily totally eliminated. If nausea or cramping occurs after taking pain medication, call this office.
- **OTHER PAIN:** If after 4 or 5 days you begin to have symptoms in the area of surgery or pain directed towards your ear, call our office.
- **SUTURES:** If sutures were used, they may need to be removed. Be sure to return on the appointment date given, if told to do so. Deeply embedded sutures may not be visible and may need to be removed at a later date due to swelling of the tissue.
- **FEVER:** A slight fever for 24 to 48 hours after surgery is common. If it persists or is over 101 degrees (taken orally), call our office.
- **SHARP BONY PROJECTIONS:** During the healing process, small sharp fragments of bone may loosen and work up through the gum. These are not roots and often work out by themselves. Return for their simple removal if uncomfortable.
- **DISCOLORATION OF THE FACE:** Bruising or discoloration is caused by bleeding beneath the surface of the skin. It usually corrects itself within a week or two after surgery.
- **SORE THROAT:** Rather common after third molar surgery, a sore throat usually will improve in a day or two by gargling with salt water. If it persists or becomes severe, consult our office.
- **STIFFNESS (TRISMUS):** The inability to move the jaw after oral surgery is a common occurrence. It usually is a direct result of the swelling discussed above. Exercise, like chewing gum, is an aid in limbering up the muscles involved. If stiffness is very severe or is associated with a fever, consult our office.
- **NUMBNESS (PARESTHESIA, ANESTHESIA):** Often operations are performed very close to nerves. The post-operative swelling and bruising of the nerves during the procedure can cause numbness, especially of the chin or tongue. This condition is usually temporary and may disappear as the nerve heals.
- **THROMBOPHLEBITIS (INFLAMMATION OF VEIN):** Rarely, after intravenous sedation, the vein in your arm may become uncomfortable, red, and firm. If this occurs, please call our office for treatment.

We hope that your visit to our office was comfortable and pleasant. We appreciate your confidence and look forward to being of service to you and your friends in the future.

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