

Post-operative Care for Oral Surgery



Bite

Bite firmly on the gauze sponges placed on your surgical area(s) for one hour following surgery. Do not clench your teeth; just hold your teeth together on the gauze.

Bleeding

If bleeding continues, bite FIRMLY for one hour on clean gauze or a slightly wet tea bag. Repeat this procedure hourly until bleeding stops and it no longer bothers you. Oozing is not uncommon for 24 hours post-op. DO NOT use cotton balls.

Medication

Remove gauze sponges and take pain medication (if medication was not given to you at the office) within two hours of your surgery and prior to the local freezing coming out. It is important to take your pain medication promptly and as prescribed for the first two days as necessary. Take medication with food or nutritious liquid to avoid stomach irritation. If nausea occurs, drink flat cola or ginger ale to settle it. Gravol tablets, liquid, or suppositories may be taken as prescribed as necessary. Be sure to finish all prescribed antibiotics as directed.

Apply an Ice Pack

Apply an ice pack to the side of your face to which the surgery was performed. Alternate 10 to 20 minutes on and 10 to 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours following surgery (while you are awake).

Sleep

Sleep with head and shoulders ELEVATED on an extra pillow for a few days. This helps control swelling. Swelling will occur and can increase for the first three days and then will normally subside.

Rinsing

DO NOT spit or rinse your mouth on the day of surgery. You do need to start gently rinsing the next morning with warm salt water (1 tsp salt to 1 glass of warm water) or with the Chlorhexidine rinse supplied in your care package. Slight bleeding will occur with rinsing and gentle teeth brushing for up to 10 days post-operation. Avoid using mouthwash (i.e. Scope, Listerine) during the healing phase as it tends to dry out the mouth tissues. Do not rinse excessively. Two to three rinses a day is sufficient.

Soft Toothbrush

Use a soft toothbrush to brush your teeth. There will be one provided in your care package; however AVOID brushing in the sutured areas for at least five days following surgery.

Stitches

Stitches will dissolve on their own in three to seven days following surgery.

Rest

Rest and avoid excessive activity for 48 hours. Do not operate a vehicle or machinery for 24 hours if you have had intravenous sedation.

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Refrain

Refrain from smoking for a minimum of 72 hours. Smoking will increase the risk of a post-operative “dry socket”.

Refrain from alcohol while taking any medications for a minimum of 72 hours. Alcohol may worsen the side effects of your prescribed medication.

Sinus Involvement

Do not blow your nose for two weeks, but wipe gently. If your nose becomes plugged, use a nasal spray as directed by the oral surgeon. Sneeze with your mouth open to reduce the pressure on your sinus.

Birth Control

Please be advised that taking prescribed antibiotics while taking the birth control pill will likely render your contraceptive pills ineffective for a full cycle.

Please call our office or answering service should you have any questions relating to your oral surgery.

Soft Foods and Liquids

Soft foods and liquids are recommended for the first few days following surgery. Avoid rice, corn, toast, chips, popcorn, spicy food, seeds, and nuts for at least five days after surgery as small particles may get caught in the socket area and cause a secondary infection. **DO NOT** use a straw. Sucking may loosen the stitches and blood clots, causing unnecessary bleeding.

Soft Food Suggestions

- Warm beverages are okay, but avoid hot
- Smoothie (using banana, yogurt, avocado, orange juice, mango slices)
- Ensure/Boost
- Puddings
- Jello
- Scrambled or softly poached eggs
- Mashed potatoes, carrots, turnips, squash, sweet potatoes
- Well-cooked pasta
- Soup (tomato or broth)
- Soft white bread
- Ice cream
- Avoid vegetables that may become stuck, like corn and peas

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