



Post Operative Instructions

Home Care

- Blood clots are now forming in your mouth. It is vital to keep these as undisturbed as possible, otherwise you may develop a dry socket. In order to prevent dislodging the blood clots, adhere to the following:
- Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth today. You can begin brushing your teeth (avoiding the surgical area) in 24 hours. Also after 24 hours, begin rinsing three times a day (after meals) with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon salt in 1 cup of water). Any prescription mouth rinses that have been prescribed can also be used 24 hours after surgery. Use the salt water first and then the mouth rinse.
- Do not smoke for at least 3 days. Smoking will significantly delay healing and increase your pain.
- Do not use drinking straws for at least 1 week. Do not drink alcohol, especially while taking pain medicine.
- Do not forcibly spit. If you collect saliva in your mouth, lean over the sink and let it "dribble" out.
- If you had an upper tooth extracted, do not forcibly blow your nose for at least a week. Often there is a thin membrane that remains between the tooth socket and the sinus. Damage to the membrane can prolong healing and may require additional treatment.

Pain and Swelling

- Pain and swelling usually peak in severity around 48 to 72 hours after surgery. If the pain increases after 72 hours, you may be developing a dry socket or a possible infection.
- Apply an ice pack to your cheeks for the first 24 hours. The ice pack should be applied intermittently, leaving it on for 20 minutes and off for 20 minutes. Bags of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel make excellent ice packs. Swelling can take up to two weeks to disappear. Bruising may be evident for the same length of time.
- Take medication as prescribed and directed for pain.

Bleeding

- Keep firm pressure on gauze compresses for the first hour after surgery. Before placing new compresses in the mouth, moisten with tap water.
- There will be some oozing of blood following surgery. Do not be alarmed. A little bit of blood,

combined with a lot of saliva, looks like a lot of blood. Use an old pillow case for the first 48 hours.

Medications

- If prescribed antibiotics, take until all gone, even if you feel better. If you should develop a rash or other allergic reaction, discontinue immediately and contact our office. If taken with foods such as yogurt, GI disturbances can be minimized.
- For women on birth control pills, patches or injections: **Antibiotics can interfere with birth control.** Use alternative forms of contraceptives for one week after completion of antibiotics.
- Take pain medicine before the numbness from the anesthesia wears off.
- Do not drink alcohol, operate machinery, drive, or make any important decisions while taking pain medicine.

Food and Liquids

- Do not use straws.
- Avoid any hot foods until the numbness from the anesthesia has worn off.
- Avoid carbonated beverages, spicy foods, and alcohol.
- Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.
- Return to a normal diet as soon as possible. Exceptions include anything grainy such as rice, grits, cream of wheat, nuts, and popcorn.
- Examples of soft foods that will be easier to eat while healing include: yogurt, ice cream, instant breakfast, soups, broths, juice, jello, and mashed potatoes.

Activity

- If you have been sedated, wear a seatbelt and have a responsible adult drive you home.
- Do not make important personal or business decisions until tomorrow.
- You may return to full activity once you have not taken pain medicine for 24 hours.
- Do not undertake strenuous activity for 72 hours.

Sutures

- The sutures will dissolve in 3 to 7 days unless otherwise directed.

For Patients Receiving Sedation

- Place a warm compress on the IV site if needed.
- Rest until all sedatives have worn off and have someone with you for the first 24 hours.