

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORAL SURGERY/EXTRACTION PATIENTS

With proper attention to postoperative care, most surgical procedures involving the oral cavity will heal quickly and without complication.

1. **PROTECTION OF BLOOD CLOT.** Maintain gentle pressure by biting on the gauze sponge that has been placed over the surgical area. Do this for at least 15 minutes. If bleeding continues, replace sterile sponge with another as provided and maintain pressure for another 30 minutes. Some oozing of blood is normal following oral surgery and it may persist until the next day. You do not need to use gauze if there is no active bleeding.
2. **DO NOT RINSE.** Do not rinse or use a mouthwash for at least 24 hours. After 24 hours rinse with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon table salt in 8oz of warm water) two to three times a day for 3-5 days. Do not rinse vigorously; this may initiate bleeding at the site of surgery.
3. **PAIN.** Following oral surgery, it is normal to experience some discomfort. Appropriate pain medication will be prescribed by the surgeon if he feels it will be necessary. If none has been prescribed, and it is medically safe, take a combination of 400 mg ibuprofen (Advil x2) and 500 mg acetaminophen (Tylenol x1) every 6 hours as needed for pain. Do not exceed the maximum daily doses of these medications.
4. **SWELLING.** Swelling of the jaw and facial tissues as well as difficulty opening often follows oral surgery. To minimize swelling, apply an ice bag as soon as possible to the affected side of the face for a 15 minute interval, this may be repeated every 30 minutes for the next 6 hours postoperatively. The ice bag should be used only on the day of surgery although swelling may persist and even increase for the next day or two before it begins to subside. As the swelling resolves, a normal degree of opening should return.
5. **THE TOOTHBRUSH.** Brush your teeth as normal but give special consideration to the surgical site. We do not recommend brushing the extraction site or sutured area. After 24-48 hours you can brush as you normally would as long as you feel comfortable enough to do so. A clean mouth heals faster.
6. **EATING.** Adequate food and fluid intake following surgery and/or general extraction is most important. If you find that eating your regular diet is too difficult, you should supplement your diet with nourishing liquids, and soft foods. Solid foods may be added as soon as you can chew comfortably. Hot temperature, highly acidic, or spicy foods are not recommended immediately following surgery.
7. **AVOID.** Avoid all excessive activity the day of surgery; don't consume liquids through a straw; avoid alcoholic beverages until healing is well established.
8. **SUTURES.** If sutures were used, it is important to return on the appointment date so that they can be removed. Try to leave them alone with brushing and your tongue as much as possible.
9. **COMPLICATIONS.** Prolonged or excessive discomfort, swelling, bleeding or fever seldom arise; however, if there is a problem you should contact the office so that further direct instructions for your care may be given.

In the case of additional questions or emergency, please call us immediately at (724) 728-0970.