

Post-Operative Instructions for Oral Surgery, Extractions, and Bone Grafts

1. Bleeding will likely be present for several hours, and oozing which results in red saliva is common for 24 hours after surgery. Bite gently on gauze for 2 hours after your surgery. This allows a clot to form, insuring proper healing. Fresh gauze (which we have given you) gently on a wet tea bag for 1-2 hours using standard, non herbal, tea bag. Avoid rinsing for 24 hours, and call us if your mouth fills with large blood clots.

2. Swelling is to be expected, often peaks on the 3rd day and is usually gone by the 7th day. Apply an ice bag to the side of your face where surgery was performed to help reduce the swelling. Hold ice in place for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for 48 hours. Some swelling and discoloration of the skin are common and need not cause alarm. However, if swelling continues to enlarge after 3 days or if swelling is hot/ red, contact our office immediately. Normal swelling may last for 7 to 10 days. Sleeping with the head elevated (an extra pillow or two) can help reduce swelling and discomfort. Starting four days after surgery (two days of using ice + one extra day), moist heat (heating pad, microwaved heating pad with cover, or hot water bottle) over the sugerized area will help reduce any residual swelling.

3. Food: Please do not eat, drink, or rinse your mouth for 3 hours after surgery. After 3 hours, begin eating oft. Liquid foods for two days and then advance to a regular diet as tolerated. Avoid foods likely to get caught in the surgery site or tear the stitched such as chips, nuts, rice, popcorn, etc. Avoid hot food, drinks, or active chewing while your mouth is still numb; avoid very hot food and drinks for one day.

During the next 2 days, drink about twice as much fluid as you normally would (at least 10 tall glasses daily) to avoid dehydration and fever. Avoid drinking through a straw for 24 hours to protect your blood clots.

Please do NOT rinse or spit hard for one day

4. Jaw Stiffness and limited opening are common after removal of impacted teeth and usually resolve within 7-10 days. Beginning 3 days after surgery, warm/ hot soaks on both sides of face, with gentle opening exercises (20 minutes, 4 times daily), will help speed the return of normal opening.

5. Stitches (sutures) may dissolve on their own or may need to be removed in one week. They will be taken care of at your post-operative appointment. Stitches falling out present no problems unless persistent bleeding occurs.

6. Alcohol and smoking should be avoided for 3 days after extractions and for 7 days for grafts.

7. A “dry” socket is more likely if you use alcohol, tobacco (smoking), or birth control drugs. It usually presents as pain 3-7 days after surgery at the extraction site, not relieved by pain medications, and will be treated with placement of mediated dressing.

8. Avoid the following during recuperation period:

- Spitting or rinsing hard for one day
- Using a straw
- Carbonated (fizzy) drinks
- Smoking for 3 days for extractions and one week for grafts
- Alcohol for 3 days after extractions and one week for grafts
- Sedatives
- Hot liquids
- Electric toothbrush
- Vigorous activity for 48 hours
- Contact sports for 1 week

9. Oral Hygiene will speed healing and reduce odor and infection: One day after surgery, begin rinsing your mouth gently with warm (not hot) salt water. (one rounded teaspoon of salt in a tall glass of warm water) Allow the salty water to remain in the mouth for 30 seconds. **DO NOT** rinse vigorously. Rinse 4 times daily for 5 days. You may also begin brushing and flossing all your teeth to remove plaque. Please use fluoride toothpaste. Over-the-counter mouth rinse may be used if diluted in half with water.

10. Discomfort and Pain Medications: Follow directions on the bottle. Expect 2-3 days of significant discomfort following the removal of impacted teeth. Take your over-the-counter ibuprofen (Motron, Advil, Nuprin), naproxyn (Naprosyn Aleve), aspirin or Tylenol regularly for 3-5 days as recommended. Add in your prescription pain medication as needed. Take your medications before numbness wears off.

Begin taking your pain medication at _____ so that it has time to take effect prior to the numbing medicine wearing off. Pain medication can cause an upset stomach and nausea, therefore, it is best to take it with food. Any medication which may cause stomach upset and nausea should be taken with a tall, hot drink, soft foods and/ or antacids. You should rest (minimize movement) when taking narcotic pain medications and call us if vomiting persists.

Begin your antibiotic medication at _____, then continue to follow directions on bottle.

Begin the Peridex Rinse on _____ and continue to rinse for 30 seconds twice daily for _____ weeks.

11. Fever (under 101°) is usually due to decreased fluid intake, vomiting and dehydration. It usually responds well to increased fluid intake. Fever of 102° and above may be a sign of infection and you should notify us immediately.

12. Please call us if you experience any of the following:

- Vomiting
- Generalized rash/ itch
- Bloody persistent diarrhea
- Increasing pain or swelling after the 3rd day
- Fever greater than 101°
- Foul taste or discharge in the mouth
- If numbness continues more than 12 hours