

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS-Expanded

Good care of the mouth after surgery has an important positive effect on healing. Some swelling, discomfort, bruising, and restricted jaw function are expected and need not cause alarm. These may be minimized by reading the following instructions and following them as carefully as possible.

BLEEDING CONTROL

Gauze sponges have been placed over the surgical site. Those should be held in place by firm, constant biting pressure for a full hour after being discharged. Place another folded gauze sponge over the surgery site and bite firmly for another 90 minutes. Rest and sleep with your head elevated for three days following surgery. Try to avoid spitting, sucking, using a straw, or other disruptive activity for 24 hours following your surgery. If after two hours there is still active bleeding, moisten a tea bag (one with caffeine), wrap it in a gauze sponge, place it over the extraction site, and bite firmly for 45 to 60 minutes. Repeat the procedure until the bleeding has subsided. It is normal to have some oozing of blood and blood tinged saliva for 2-3 days following surgery. Bed linens should be protected to avoid staining. If heavy bleeding does not stop after carefully following the above steps, call the office immediately.

PAIN CONTROL

Ordinarily the use of non-prescription medication, like Ibuprofen (advil or nuprin) will adequately relieve pain when taken in doses of 2 or 3 tablets every 4 to 6 hours. Children should receive proportionally smaller doses based on their weight according to the directions. If you need something stronger, the prescription medication should be taken to supplement the above medication. Normal dosage for the prescription pain medication is 1 tablet every 3 to 4 hours as needed for pain, but this may be increased or doubled for one or two dosing intervals. If this is necessary, you should contact this office and you may be asked to be seen for a quick check-up. Always check the prescription and the directions on the bottle prior to changing the way the medication is prescribed. If there are any questions, call the office or your pharmacist. **DO NOT TAKE ANY ASPIRIN containing products for 5 days following your surgery unless instructed by your doctor.** Aspirin can prolong bleeding and healing following your surgery. All medications should be taken with some food. We recommend at least crackers and 7-up or other clear liquids. Avoid milk and dairy products, as they can lead to nausea. **SMOKING WITHIN 48 HOURS AFTER SURGERY MAY INCREASE CHANCES OF INFECTION, PAIN, AND OTHER COMPLICATIONS.**

SWELLING CONTROL

The amount of post-operative swelling depends mainly on the individual, but also on the difficulty of the surgery. Swelling usually reaches its peak at 48 to 72 hours following surgery. It is this swelling that causes pain and restricted opening. Therefore, to minimize your swelling, ice should be used for the first 24 hours immediately following surgery. We recommend frozen peas, ice in freezer bags, or gel ice packs. Ice should be used for twenty minutes on the face, and then removed for 15-20 minutes (unless the ice is insulated, then you can use it continuously). Continue this 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours following surgery. Avoid hot liquids and foods during the first 24 hours following surgery, since early application of heat can prolong and add to the swelling. Keeping your head elevated at all times for three days following surgery will also aid in the reduction of the swelling. It is not uncommon to see some mild bruising following surgery. After the first 24-36 hours, stop using ice and switch to warm moist heat. We recommend warming a damp cloth in a microwave (be careful it is not too hot or some skin damage may occur). Apply this to the affected area of the face for 20 minute intervals on then 20 minutes off for the next 48 hours. Heat will help the body clear the swelling more rapidly. You should also begin warm salt water rinses (8 oz of warm salt water mixed with a teaspoon of salt) and gently swish it around your mouth for 30 seconds and let the water fall from your mouth (avoid spitting for three days).

DIET

Skipping meals will add to the discomfort and may cause dizziness, nausea, and weakness. A liquid diet (COLD) is wise the day of surgery. You should at least have crackers and clear liquids the night after surgery and while taking medications to reduce the chance of nausea. The day after surgery, soft foods can usually be tolerated well. Soft foods can be anything like pudding, jello, cottage cheese, ice cream, but nothing harder than a scrambled egg. Also, take little bites. There are several commercial dietary supplements available that are high in protein and calories and are easy to make (Sustical, Ensure, Boost, Carnation Instant Breakfast, Slim-fast, Sego, etc.) You should avoid hot foods, spicy foods, and food that can crumble or fracture and become lodged in the extraction site (tortilla chips, french bread crust, etc.) for 7-10 days following surgery. After 24 hours, you can slowly advance your diet to soft foods and then to regular foods over the next 2-3 days following surgery. After day 3, you can have whatever you can tolerate, but for 10 days avoid foods that can damage the surgical site (french bread crust, tortilla chips, hard pizza crust, nuts, seed, stiff rice, etc.)

HYGIENE

Try not to disturb the clotting process the day of surgery. The next day begin warm mild salt water rinses or the prescribed rinse. The mixture is 8 ounces of warm water to a teaspoon of salt and then gently swished around the mouth for thirty seconds and then allowed to fall from the mouth. Avoid forcefully spitting as this can dislodge the newly forming clot in your mouth. Continue rinsing four times a day and after meals for ten days after surgery. You should avoid brushing your teeth until the numbness has gone away. Then you should resume brushing your teeth at this time, but obviously be careful not to brush the site itself (stay away from areas that are sore). A clean mouth feels better and will heal faster. **AVOID SMOKING FOR AT LEAST 48 HOURS.**

IF THERE ARE ANY PROBLEMS THAT PERSIST OR QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING YOUR TREATMENT, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE AT ANY TIME. We want to be of assistance to minimize your discomfort and prevent complications. Please return for your post-operative visit.

(408) 254-8794 or (650)692-1530