



SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

The Day of Surgery:

BLEEDING: It is normal for the area(s) to bleed during the first 24 hours after surgery. 30 to 45 minutes of biting with pressure on a rolled-up gauze sponge will control the bleeding. Chewing, talking and moving will tend to re-start or cause additional bleeding. If bleeding reoccurs, simply reapply gauze with biting pressure for 30 to 45 minutes. "Pink" saliva for a few days is also possible due to very slight bleeding, depending on the procedure.

PAIN: Follow the Dr.'s instructions regarding pain medicine:

- 1) If **no sedation** was done for the appointment, fill the pain medicine prescription immediately upon leaving the office, and begin to take the medication as directed as soon as you return home (within one hour).
- 2) If **sedation was done** for the appointment, the patient may take 3 tablets of 200mg ibuprofen and one tablet of Extra Strength Tylenol (all four tablets at the same time), every four to six hours as needed, during the first 8 hours after the sedation. **No prescription pain medicine should be taken by the patient in the first 6 hours after the sedation appointment**, unless otherwise directed by the Dr. Do not take ibuprofen for more than one week.

To reduce the possibility of nausea from prescription pain medication, take it with soft food, especially containing protein. Do not drive after taking any narcotic pain medicine, and do not take it with sleeping pills or alcohol.

SWELLING: A small amount of swelling (due to inflammation) is normal following surgery. To minimize swelling, apply an ice bag (a plastic bag of frozen green peas works well, also) to the outside of the cheek in the area(s) of surgery --10 minutes on, 10 minutes off, for the first few hours. Less swelling = less pain.

DO NOT: Rinse, spit, exercise, smoke, drink through a straw, consume carbonated beverages or chew excessively (no sucking or spitting motions) for 24 hours after the surgery. These measures are to reduce bleeding, as well as to help prevent a "dry socket" in extraction cases.

VERY IMPORTANT—PLEASE CALL RIGHT AWAY: if you have difficulty opening as fully as usual, at any time after the surgery. This is called "trismus," and you need to be instructed in how to alleviate it. In extremely rare cases, patients have not worked to regain their normal range of motion, and the trismus has become permanent.

SLEEP: For the first one or two nights after the procedure, sleep in a recliner chair or with your head propped up with some pillows (with an old pillowcase). If you keep your head above your heart level for the first 2 days, it will significantly cut down on post-op swelling. Less swelling = less pain.

ORAL HYGIENE: Brush your teeth and tongue. Do not use a water-pik or an electric toothbrush around the surgical area for a few weeks after the procedure. If stitches were placed, be very careful when brushing and flossing around the area, to prevent loosening them.

Starting 24 Hours after Surgery:

Warm Salt-water Rinses: Rinse your mouth (don't swish) with a warm, salt-water solution (1/2-teaspoon of salt in 8-ounces of warm water), 5-10 times throughout the day. Hold it each time in your mouth for several seconds, then gently spit it out.

Exercise: Avoid strenuous exercise for the first 7 days. Strenuous physical activity may increase postoperative pain or cause post-operative bleeding and swelling. Less activity = less pain.

Touching the Surgical Site: It is important that the surgical site remains untouched as much as possible during the initial stages of healing. Avoid stretching your mouth to look at the site, and avoid playing on the surgical site with your tongue.

Food: Eat a soft diet, chew away from the site if possible, and avoid any foods that would be more likely to get stuck in the extraction site (such as corn, popcorn, nuts, and seeds). For the first few days, avoid hot-temperature foods or drinks. Consider a nutritional food supplement (Carnation Instant Breakfast drink, Ensure, Slim-Fast, Glucerna for diabetics, etc.). Don't use straws for the 1st week.

Smoking: Refrain from smoking. Smokers have a much higher incidence of dry sockets. If you must smoke, do so as little as possible, for example, 5 cigarettes or less per day and only smoke half the cigarette. No cigars or pipes.

Aspirin: Unless you have a special medical reason for taking aspirin, do not take aspirin products for 7 days after the surgery, as it can cause bleeding.

If excessive swelling occurs or discomfort remains a few days after surgery, call us at **504-347-6000**.