

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXTRACTIONS/ORAL SURGERY

BLEEDING: Biting on the gauze pads will probably be necessary for the first few hours to control bleeding. If extra gauze was given to you, change them every 30 minutes. Keep the head elevated and rested. Do not spit or rinse excessively or engage in physical activity since this stimulates bleeding. Some oozing could last up to 24 hours.

NOTE: If heavy bleeding persists, replace the gauze with a clean folded gauze pad placed over the surgery site and maintain pressure until the bleeding stops. In rare cases, a tea bag (tannic acid) may need to be used to encourage clotting (regular/black tea, not herbal tea). Call Dr. Bond if bleeding doesn't stop or is heavy for too long.

SWELLING: This is normal following a surgical procedure in the mouth. It should reach its maximum in 48 hours and then diminish by the fifth post-operative day. The anti-swelling medicine we usually give cuts it way down to less ¼ of what it would normally be. Place ice or a cold compress on the face in the region of the surgery for 20 minutes on/20 minutes off for the first 4 – 8 hours. Ice is only effective on the day of surgery.

SMOKING: If you smoke, avoid smoking during the first week after surgery

DIET: A nutritious liquid diet is necessary for the first day. Hard foods eaten while you are numb can dislodge the gums that were lifted and then sutured in place. When numbness wears off, you can gradually progress to harder foods. Try to avoid eating around the extraction site.

ACTIVITY: For the first 24 – 48 hours, you should rest. Patients who have sedation should refrain from driving an automobile or from engaging in any task that requires alertness for the next 24 hours.

STARTING THE DAY AFTER SURGERY:

1. Brush teeth but avoid the surgery area. As healing takes place, you can gradually brush your teeth near the surgery site. Soften the bristles by placing them under hot water.
2. Use warm salt water as a mouth rinse 3-5 times per day for 5-7 days after the surgery. (1 tsp. salt in a glass of warm water)
3. If a stronger pain medication was prescribed for you, begin taking it as prescribed upon removal of the gauze. These medications can make you sleepy, cause a mild upset stomach or mild dizziness. Do not drive or drink alcohol while taking these medications. For mild pain, take 400-600 mg of Ibuprofen or Motrin every 4-6 hours. If antibiotics are prescribed, be sure to take them all as directed. **NOTE:** They can render birth control pills ineffective.
4. Dry socket is a delayed healing response, which may occur during the 3rd to 6th day post-operative day. It is in the lower socket and associated with a throbbing pain on the side of the face, which may seem to be directed up toward the ear. In mild cases, simply increasing the pain medication for a few days and can control the symptoms. If this unsuccessful, please call your doctor to arrange for some medication to be temporarily placed in the socket, or a special rinse to help with the pain. They generally get better whether treated or not. Dry sockets can be brought on by rinsing or spitting too much the first day, too much physical activity, using a straw, smoking, birth control pills, particularly difficult surgery, and pre-existing infection. They are twice as common in patients over 30.
5. Don't chew hard (even on a hard crust of bread or on ice) for 4-6 weeks after having lower wisdom teeth removed or participate in sports where you may be hit in the jaw. The lower jaw is temporarily weaker and the bone may crack requiring the jaws to be wired together for healing.

CONTACT THE DOCTOR IF:

1. Bleeding is excessive and cannot be controlled.
2. Discomfort is poorly controlled.
3. Swelling is excessive, spreading, or continuing to enlarge after 48 hours.
4. Allergies or other reactions to medications occur.

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