



## Postoperative Instructions - Oral Surgery

Following these instructions very closely will greatly help your comfort, and promote uneventful healing of the area. If any of the instructions are not followed, you might have significantly more discomfort, and the success of the procedure may be affected.

**DO NOT DISTURB THE AREA:** For the next few days, and especially the first 48 hours, it is very important to allow your body to form a good clot and start the natural healing process. Swishing, sucking through a straw, and smoking can all dislodge the clot. Keep anything sharp from entering the wound (crunchy food, toothpicks, eating utensils). Be sure to chew on the opposite side for 48 hours. The clot is the only thing protecting the bone and if it is disrupted you can get a painful dry socket

**BLEEDING:** When you leave the office, you may be biting on a gauze pad to control bleeding. Keep slight pressure on this gauze for at least 30 minutes. Do not change it during this time; it needs to remain undisturbed while a clot forms in the surgery site. After 30 minutes you may remove it. You may bite on another gauze or a moistened tea bag for another 30 minutes if you feel it is still bleeding. Small amounts of blood in the saliva can make your saliva appear quite red. This is normal and may be noticed the rest of the day after the procedure.

**SMOKING:** Smoking should be stopped following surgery. Healing and success of the surgery will be substantially reduced by the cigarette smoke and suction created when inhaling cigarettes. Smokers are at greater risk of developing a painful dry socket.

**BRUSHING:** Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours after surgery. After this, you may brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery for 3 days. Do not use toothpaste when brushing the teeth next to the extraction site, simply use a wet toothbrush when brushing the adjacent teeth.

**RINSING:** Avoid all rinsing or swishing for 48 hours after surgery. Rinsing can disturb the formation of a healing blood clot which is essential to proper healing. This could cause bleeding and risk of dry socket. After 48 hours you may begin gentle rinsing with a saltwater solution ( $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt +  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon baking soda + 8 ounces warm water). It is better to use no salt than to much salt when rinsing. Avoid commercial mouth rinses.

**ALCOHOL:** Alcohol-containing mouth rinses and beverages should be avoided during the healing process. It is especially important not to consume alcohol with pain medication, including over the counter NSAIDs or acetaminophen.

**DIET:** Eat soft foods for the first two days. Maintain a good, balanced diet. Return to normal regular meals as soon as you are able after the first two days. Drink plenty of water. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours

**SWELLING:** Applying an ice bag to the face over the operated area will minimize swelling. Apply for 15 minutes, then remove for 15 minutes. Continue this for the first day.

**NUMBNESS:** The local anesthetic will cause you to be numb for several hours after you leave the office. Be very careful not to bite, chew, pinch, or scratch the numb area. Sometimes the surgery causes residual numbness or tingling for six weeks or longer. **CONTACT YOUR DOCOTR IF YOU HAVE ANY NUMBNESS OR TINGLING AFTER ONE WEEK.**

**ACTIVITY:** After leaving the office, avoid strenuous activities and rest for the remainder of the day. Maintaining a lower blood pressure will reduce bleeding and aid healing. Avoid exercise for 48 hours.

**SINUS:** If your sinus was involved in the procedure, you should avoid blowing your nose or playing a wind musical instrument for one week. Use of decongestant medications might be recommended.

**ANTIBIOTICS:** If you were given an antibiotic prescription, take all of them as directed until they are gone. For women, some antibiotics can reduce the effectiveness of oral contraception. Use additional birth control methods for two months. Do not take antibiotics at the same time you take a pain medication to avoid nausea and possibly vomiting the antibiotic before it is absorbed.

**PAIN:** Some discomfort is normal after surgery. To minimize pain, over-the-counter non-aspirin pain relievers may be used only if recommended by your doctor. If prescription pain medication is prescribed, use only as instructed and do not exceed the recommended dose. Taking with food or milk will help reduce upset stomach. Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery when taking narcotic pain prescriptions. Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications.

**NAUSEA:** This is most often caused by taking pain medications on an empty stomach. Reduce nausea by preceding each pain pill with soft food, and taking the pill with a large glass of water.

**PAIN MANAGEMENT (it is better to stay ahead of pain rather than try to stop it after you begin to feel it):**

*For patients without allergies or contraindications to taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDS) or aspirin:*

**Take 1(one) 220mg Naproxen (Aleve) every 12(twelve) hours. For additional relief, take 1(one) 500mg Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 4(four) times per day (with meals and at bedtime for a total of 2000mg per day). Do this for at least 3(three) days and for up to 1(one) week (but no longer than 1(one) week!).**

These medications work synergistically and research has proven this combination is as effective, if not more effective, than narcotics in managing dental pain. Inflammation (swelling) is the main cause of discomfort after dental procedures. Preventing inflammation before it begins will maximize your comfort.

*For patients unable to take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications or aspirin but are able to take acetaminophen (Tylenol):*

**Take 1(one) 500mg Acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4(four) hours (not to exceed 3000mg/day)**

If you received a 4mg tablet of dexamethasone, please take in the morning as directed to minimize pain and swelling

Your doctor may prescribe a prescription pain reliever and/or antibiotic for your use and will advise you on the appropriate use of these medications. If you receive a prescription, use your prescribed medication as directed and do not use the protocols above.

Please call your dentist if you have (785-539-2314):

- Uncontrollable pain
- Excessive or severe bleeding
- Marked fever
- Excessive warm swelling occurring a few days after the procedure
- Reactions to medications, especially rash, itching, or breathing problems
- Prolonged numbness or tingling