

Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully.

Immediately following surgery:

The gauze pad placed over the surgical area should be kept in place for 30-45 minutes. After this time, the gauze pad should be removed and discarded. Vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the wound following surgery should be avoided. This may initiate bleeding by causing the blood clot that has formed to become dislodged. Take the pain medication as directed prior to the local anesthetic wearing off. It is important to eat something 10-15 minutes before taking any pain medicine. Yogurt or applesauce works well. Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. Place ice packs to the sides of your face where surgery was performed.

Pain

Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) and acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be taken in combination for pain relief as effective as narcotic pain medication.

For patient's 12 years or older:

Ibuprofen 600mg every six hours

(Do not exceed 3200mg daily)

TAKEN TOGETHER WITH

Acetaminophen 500mg every six hours

(Do not exceed 3000mg daily)

These medications should be taken together with food on a regular schedule for 3 days after surgery for the best effect.

For patients under 12 years old:

_____ mL of Children's Motrin liquid every six hours

OR

_____ mL of Children's Tylenol liquid every six hours

Child's weight _____ lbs

A prescription medication may be given, and should be taken only as directed. Do not take any medications if you have an allergy, or have been instructed by a doctor to avoid them. Do not take while operating a vehicle or machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages.

Do not share your prescription medication. Keep all medicines out of reach of children. Please dispose of your un-used medications properly.

Bleeding

Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon and expected after surgery. Excessive bleeding may be controlled by placing a tightly folded gauze pad over the area and biting firmly for 30 minutes. Repeat if necessary. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for 30 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot. To minimize further bleeding, sit upright or lay with your head elevated and avoid physical activity. If bleeding does not subside, call for further instructions.

Swelling

Swelling is a normal response to surgery, and is part of the healing process. Swelling is proportional to the procedure performed. Swelling may not be apparent until the day after surgery, and may continue to increase for 2-3 days after surgery. Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes, and sides of the face is not uncommon. Swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. An ice pack (or bag of frozen vegetables) should be applied to the side of the face where surgery was performed. Apply the ice packs 20 minutes every hour for the first 24 hours.

If swelling or jaw stiffness persists for several days, there is no cause for alarm. Twenty-four hours following surgery, the application of moist heat to the sides of the face is beneficial in reducing the swelling.

Diet

Good nutrition and adequate fluid intake are important after surgery. Soft foods and liquids are recommended for the first 24 hours after surgery (i.e., smoothies, instant breakfast, yogurt, ice cream, pudding, soup, applesauce etc). Avoid chips, nuts, and berries with seeds until surgical site(s) heal. Drink plenty of liquids. Avoid alcoholic beverages for 48 hours.

Keep the mouth clean

No rinsing of any kind should be performed until the day after surgery. You can brush your teeth the night of surgery. The day after surgery you should begin rinsing at least five times a day, especially after eating, with a cup of warm water mixed with 1/8 teaspoon of salt. Do not use any other mouth wash.

Sutures are placed in the area of surgery to help healing. Sometimes they become dislodged; this is no cause for alarm. These sutures will dissolve.

There will be a hole where the tooth was removed. The hole will gradually heal over the next month as new tissue grows. Careful attention should be given to keeping the site clean of food and plaque buildup.

No Straws, Spitting or Smoking

Do not drink through a straw or spit aggressively for one week after surgery as it may cause dry socket. Dry socket occurs when the blood clot is lost prematurely, and is very painful. This usually occurs between 3 to 5 days after your procedure. Please call the office if you experience this. Do not smoke for at least 48 hours. Smoking will delay your healing.

Activity

Restrict your activities on the day of surgery. After surgery, your whole body is involved with the recovery process. You may gradually get back to your routine as you feel comfortable.

Nausea and vomiting

In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, do not take anything by mouth for at least an hour including prescribed medicine. You should then sip on Coca-cola, ginger ale, or tea. Please allow the carbonated drinks to go flat before drinking. You should sip slowly over a fifteen-minute period. When the nausea subsides, you can begin taking solid foods and prescribed medicine. If nausea does not improve, please contact the office.

