



18807 Beardslee Blvd.
Suite 102
Bothell, WA 98011
(425) 489-8274

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Most problems that patients face after surgery are related to pain and swelling, bleeding or oozing, dietary difficulties or medication related side effects. We have attempted to provide some helpful hints that you may use to minimize any post surgical difficulties and make your experience as pleasant as possible. If you have any questions please call your surgeon.

Bleeding:

Bleeding is common in the first 24 hours. Your bleeding should stop within a few hours after surgery. Oozing and episodes of occasional bleeding may occur for up to 1 to 2 weeks after surgery and you should not be alarmed. Simple pressure with a moistened, rolled gauze pack over the extraction site will usually stop the bleeding when applied for about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Remove the gauze after about an hour. Dry gauze packs may act as a wick and dislodge the clot when removed! Using a tea bag is useful in stopping the bleeding if bleeding persists. The tea bag may be used just as you would the rolled and dampened gauze. Take the staple out of a dampened tea bag, soak it, squeeze it out, and roll it up. Place the tea bag over the extraction site. Bite on the bag for 45 minutes to an hour.

Swelling:

It is common to swell and bruise. Swelling is usually the worst at 48 to 72 hours after surgery and then begins to improve. Bruising may occur over a few days and resolve within one to two weeks. Ice helps! Apply ice to your face over the surgical area for about 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off over the first 24 hours. **If you have received a general anesthetic, you may be administered a steroid in your vein that is used to reduce swelling. The steroid may make you "feel better" than you really are and when it wears off [24-48 hours after surgery], you may "feel worse" than you really are. Don't "overdo it" in the first day or two after your surgery. Expect slightly more swelling when the steroids wear off. Sleeping with your head elevated for 3-4 days after surgery may also help to reduce the swelling.**

Pain:

Each person experiences pain in a different way and what may seem like a minor procedure to one person may be very objectionable to another. Although pain may persist for a few days, it should improve. If your pain does not improve after 4-5 days, you may be developing a "dry socket." A "dry socket" is a condition that may develop when the clot in an extraction site breaks down and leaves behind a painful socket that may need to be treated with a medicated socket packing. **Please call your surgeon if you are concerned that you may be experiencing unusual discomfort.**

Hygiene:

Warm salt water rinses help muscle stiffness and pain. Mix 1 teaspoon of salt in an 8 oz. glass of warm water [as warm as possible without burning yourself]. Swish and spit gently, 3-4 times per day over the extraction site(s) for three days, starting the evening of your surgery.

Brush your teeth. Your teeth need to be clean to help prevent an infection. Use a toothbrush, softened under warm water, and brush gently around the teeth next to your extraction sites. A little bleeding with brushing is common. **Do not use a "water pick" or electric/ultrasonic toothbrush in the area of surgery for 2 weeks after surgery.**

Avoid smoking!

Also, do not use a straw, suck on bottles, or spit aggressively. Avoid blowing your nose, or anything that will generate a significant amount of positive or negative pressure in your mouth or nose.

Infection:

Continue to take any antibiotics as prescribed. Unusual swelling or discharge may mean that you have an infection. Please note that your healing wounds will appear "whitish-grey." A slight elevation in temperature after surgery is common in the first 24 hours and does not necessarily signify infection. **Please call your surgeon if you feel you may be developing an infection.**

Diet:

After your surgery it will be difficult to eat. Hot, spicy foods, and sharp, particulate foods are especially difficult to chew and may irritate a wound or tooth socket. Softer, bland foods are the best to eat. Jell-O, cottage cheese, ice cream, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, apple sauce, macaroni and cheese, ground beef in small pieces, yogurt, pudding, and well-cooked vegetables are some examples. You may try more substantial foods as the wounds begin to heal in a day or two. **Be sure to use care when eating hot foods/drink while your mouth is numb. You may expect to be numb between 2 and 12 hours depending on the anesthetic used.**

Medications:

Anti-inflammatory medication will help reduce pain and swelling after surgery. If you can take Aspirin, Ibuprofen, or Aleve (NSAIDs) and do not have an allergy to these medications, kidney problems, stomach ulcers, or are pregnant, your surgeon has recommended:

_____ tablets of 200mg of ibuprofen (Advil[®], Motrin[®]) or _____ tablets of 220 mg of Aleve (naproxen) every _____ hours as needed for pain.

If your surgeon has prescribed an antibiotic: _____, _____ mg, please take _____ tablet(s) every _____ hours as prescribed until gone. Take this medication with solid foods. **Please note that your antibiotic may reduce the effectiveness of birth control medication**

If your surgeon has prescribed an antibacterial mouth rinse (Peridex[®]), continue to rinse for 30 seconds and spit every 12 hours for 2 weeks. Do not eat or drink anything after using the mouth rinse for 30 minutes.

If your surgeon has prescribed an opioid pain medication: _____, _____ mg, take _____ tablet(s) of this medication **after surgery** every _____ hours, if the use of anti-inflammatory medication is not sufficient to control your pain. Take this medication with solid foods. If you don't need it, don't take it. The side effects such as nausea and sleepiness may be significant. **Do not drive or operate heavy machinery after taking this medication.**

Your Follow-Up Appointment Is: Date: _____ Time: _____