



**BOTHELL**

**ORAL, MAXILLOFACIAL  
& IMPLANT SURGERY**

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## 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 and you should not be alarmed. Simple pressure with a wet, rolled gauze 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. Leaving the gauze packs in may act like a wick and keep the extraction site bleeding! A tea bag is often more 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.**

### 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, 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 pack placed in the socket in the office. **Please call the office if you are concerned that you may be experiencing unusual discomfort.**

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].

**Your Follow-Up Appointment Is: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_**

Swish and spit 3-4 times per day over the extraction site(s) for three days, starting the evening of your surgery. ***Avoid smoking!*** Do not use a straw, do not use a "Water Pick!"

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, or stomach ulcers, we recommend you take \_\_\_\_\_ ibuprofen (Advil<sup>®</sup>, Motrin<sup>®</sup>) or \_\_\_\_\_ Aleve<sup>®</sup> (You may use \_\_\_\_\_ tsp. of elixir for children) every \_\_\_\_\_ hours for \_\_\_\_\_ days

If your surgeon has prescribed an antibiotic: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ mg. Please take \_\_\_\_\_ pill/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 pills!"***

If your surgeon has prescribed an antibacterial mouth rinse, continue to rinse for 30 seconds and spit every 12 hours for two weeks after surgery. Do not eat or drink anything after using the mouth rinse for 30 minutes.

If your surgeon has prescribed a narcotic pain medication: \_\_\_\_\_. Take this medication **after surgery** if needed for 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.

### 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.

**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. If you normally use an electric toothbrush, turn it off when you brush around the surgery sites.

### 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, soft fish, 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 while your mouth is numb. You may expect to be numb between 2 and 12 hours depending on the anesthetic used.**