

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

After Oral Surgery

Care of the mouth following oral surgery has a very important role in proper healing. Patients benefit by closely adhering to or advice on what to do following surgery. Please remember that each person will respond differently from oral surgery. Also, Similar procedures on one side of the mouth vary greatly from the side with regard to post-operative pain, swelling, bleeding, and healing time. Please consider these instructions as a general guide to recovery.

Things to Expect

Swelling: Expect the swelling to increase over 2 to 3 days. It should gradually subside within a week.

Discomfort: Often, the pain will increase over a couple of days like the swelling. It is also common to have difficulty while opening your mouth wide during the first week. Pain when swallowing occurs at times.

Bleeding: Typically, the most active bleeding is over the first 4 to 6 hours. However, the extraction site may re-bleed later in the evening. Mild oozing (mixed with saliva) is common over the first 24 hours.

If a "BONE GRAFT" was placed: Expect a mild dull ache that lasts about a week to 10 days. Expect to see a "white" area within the extraction site which is a healthy sign of a new layer of gum tissue regenerating. You may experience a small number of graft particles that migrate from the surgical site.

Things to Do

Prevent Bleeding: Keep your head elevated on a couple of pillows. Bite on gauze for a few hours after surgery. Check the gauze every 30 minutes and change if completely saturated. Keep your teeth together (even if talking) to apply pressure over the sites. Do not sleep with gauze in your mouth. Apply new gauze if the extraction site re-bleeds. A wet tea bag placed over the surgical site (under the gauze) for one hour often helps the blood to clot. (Use a regular tea bag, like Lipton, which has Tannic Acid)

Prevent Swelling: Ice packs applied to the face over the surgical site will help reduce swelling. Apply ice pack 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off its bedtime. Also, medications (like ibuprofen) at to reduce inflammation. Ibuprofen as directed will minimize the swelling. ***After three days,*** a heating pad may be applied 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off. The heat will help any residual swelling resolve.

Diet: Stay well hydrated!! Drink at least eight 8 oz. Glasses of liquid a day. Also, remember to eat a well-balanced diet (with plenty of carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins (C & E), and minerals) during the recovery time. Start soft (shakes, mashed potatoes, soup, etc.) and keep the temperature warm, not steaming hot. Resume normal foods as you feel better. No crunchy food for at least a week.

Mouth Rinsing: Do not rinse on the day of surgery!!! Start the next day with GENTLE rinsing with

warm salt water (teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) several times a day. Also, an antibacterial mouth rinse may have been prescribed to use twice a day. Continue to brush and floss the unaffected areas. If an irrigating syringe was provided, wait 4 days before using, and use salt water to irrigate the extraction sites.

Things NOT to Do

NO SMOKING for 4 days in order to prevent "Dry Sockets" and prolonged pain. Also, **avoid drinking through a straw and spitting**. Vigorous swishing is not advised. Gentle swishing only. This may dislodge the blood clot that is covering the surgical site. Also, **avoid strenuous physical activity** for at least 4 days.

Call the Office (503)255-2406

- Fever, temperature > 101.5 F.
- If the swelling worsens after the 4th day, or if new swelling occurs within weeks/months after surgery.
- Uncontrolled pain or if you feel no improvement after 4-5 days.
- Allergic reaction to any of the medicine. Call 911 if allergic reactions seem life threatening