



Periodontal Surgery After Care FAQs

You have just received periodontal surgery, and our goal is to help you feel comfortable and confident in your post-operative care. Kindly reference these guidelines and follow them carefully to help ensure successful healing. Feel free to contact us anytime with questions.

1. Pain management: How long should I take pain medication?

Please take your pain medication for at least 72 hours beginning the morning of your surgery. Follow the instructions on your prescriptions. Usually, the recommended regimen for effective pain management is to take 600-800mg of ibuprofen together with 1000mg of acetaminophen every 8 hours. If you have been prescribed narcotics, please follow the directions on your prescription.

Even if you are not in any pain or discomfort, it is crucial to take these medications as directed in order to maintain comfort and minimize swelling. Please take ibuprofen with food as it can be harsh on your stomach. You may continue taking these pain medications for an additional 3-4 days if needed. If you are still experiencing pain after one week, please call us.

2. Post-operative pain & discomfort: How long will I be uncomfortable?

It is normal to experience pain & discomfort for the first few days after dental surgery. After a week, if you feel that your pain, swelling, and/or throbbing is getting worse instead of better, please call us.

3. Ice packs & swelling: Should I apply ice?

It is normal to experience some swelling & bruising after dental surgery. To help minimize this, please gently apply ice to the outside of your face where your surgery was performed, for up to 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the rest of the day.

4. Antibiotics: Do I need to take them?

If you have been prescribed an antibiotic, please take the prescription until it is finished. If you develop an allergic reaction such as hives, swelling, or a rash, please stop taking the medication and call us. If you develop difficulty breathing, call 911.

Call us at (978) 501-2222 | Text us at (833) 854-0931

We're happy to help!

5. Eating & drinking: What is OK after surgery?

After surgery, please avoid chewing at the surgical site, drinking hot beverages, and eating food that is hot, spicy, crunchy, chewy, and/or contains seeds. If you received an extraction, implant, or other periodontal surgery, please eat only soft foods for the first 7-10 days. If you received a soft tissue graft (free gingival graft or connective tissue graft) please eat only soft foods for the next 4-6 weeks.

6. Bleeding: What do I do if I experience bleeding?

Avoid any forceful rinsing or drinking through a straw for 7 days, as this can dislodge the initial blood clot and cause bleeding from the surgical site. Post-operative oozing is normal and expected, but if you are experiencing significant bleeding please apply firm pressure with a moistened gauze or moistened black tea bag for 20 minutes. If you continue to have persistent bleeding, please call our office.

7. Smoking: Can I smoke?

No - avoid smoking for the first 2 weeks at a minimum since smoking delays healing and increases your chances of an infection or post-operative complication.

8. Hygiene: Can I brush and floss my teeth?



No - do not perform any hygiene at the surgical site, but brush and floss normally elsewhere. Further guidance will be given at your post-operative visit.

9. Activity: When can I exercise?

We ask that you limit your exercise and activity level for the first 5 days after surgery to minimize bleeding, complications, & disruption of the healing process.

10. Implant healing abutment: Is something loose?

If you had an implant placed, there will either be a cover screw or a metal healing abutment covering the implant. If these become loose or fall out, the implant will not be harmed, but we should replace it as soon as possible. Please call us.

11. Bone graft: Why do I see white stuff?

It is normal for some of the white bone grafting material to be visible or dislodge after your procedure.

12. Sinus lift: Are there any special precautions?

If you had a sinus lift, avoid any nose blowing for 72 hours after surgery and DO NOT travel by airplane for 2 weeks. DO NOT hold your nose for sneezing. Light bleeding from the nose is normal. You may use a nasal or oral decongestant if needed.