

Gingivectomy (Gum Surgery) POST CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Congratulations on taking this step to achieve a healthy and confident smile.

Immediate Post-Surgery Instructions

- **Wait to Eat:** Do not eat until the anesthesia completely wears off. If you are hungry, stick to liquids like soup or smoothies.
- **Avoid Biting Injuries:** Be careful not to bite your lips, cheeks, or tongue while numb. This can cause injury.
- **Mild Discomfort:** Some soreness once the anesthesia fades is normal.

What to Expect & Pain Management

- You may take over-the-counter pain relievers such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Advil (ibuprofen) as directed by Dr. White.
 - **Swelling:** Apply an ice pack on the outside of your cheek near the surgical area—20 minutes on, 10 minutes off—for the first 24–48 hours.
 - Keep your head elevated while resting or sleeping to reduce swelling.
 - Slight bleeding or pink-tinged saliva is normal for the first few hours.
 - White or yellow film on the healing area is normal and not a sign of infection.
- If you experience increasing pain, swelling, excessive bleeding, or a fever, contact the office immediately.

Oral Hygiene

Day of Surgery (First 24 Hours)

- Avoid brushing, flossing, using a Waterpik or rinsing the surgical site.
- Do not spit, use a straw, or rinse vigorously—this may disturb the healing tissue

After 24 hours

- Gently brush your teeth using a soft-bristled toothbrush, avoiding the surgical site.
- Begin salt water rinses (½ teaspoon of salt in 8 oz warm water) 2–3 times per day, especially after meals.
- Avoid flossing near the surgical site for at least 7 days, or as directed.
Do not touch the area with your fingers.
- If prescribed a mouth rinse (e.g., chlorhexidine), use it as directed.

Diet

- Eat soft, cool, non-irritating foods that are easy to chew and swallow for the first 24–48 hours.
Recommended foods include: soups, smoothies, yogurt, scrambled eggs, oatmeal, pudding, or jello.

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- Avoid hot, spicy, crunchy, or acidic foods and drinks, as well as carbonated and alcoholic beverages, for the first few days.
- Do not use straws for the first 3-4 days to prevent dislodging any clot or tissue dressing.
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated and aid in the healing process.
- Avoid smoking and vaping which can significantly impede healing and increase the risk of complications.

Other Important Considerations

- Minor bleeding is expected for a few hours. If bleeding continues or worsens, apply gentle pressure with gauze and contact the office.
- Limit strenuous activity for 48-72 hours to minimize swelling and bleeding.
- If you wear a removable appliance (e.g., retainer or flipper), minimize or avoid use in the surgical area for at least 5-7 days, or as advised.
- Contact the office if you notice:
 - Fever over 101°F (38.3°C)
 - Pus or unusual discharge from the surgical site
 - Persistent or worsening pain not relieved by medication