



General Post-Operative Instructions

General Anesthesia Precautions

- **If general anesthesia or IV sedation was utilized, do not leave the patient unattended for the first 12 hours.
- **Please closely supervise the patient when getting up or going to the bathroom.
- **In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, do not take anything by mouth for at least an hour. You should sip a soda slowly and slowly resume oral intake. Call the office if nausea does not subside by the evening.

When You Get Home

1. Remove gauze packing.
2. Drink at least ¼ of your milkshake (or smoothie, or other cool, thick liquid) using a spoon—NOT a straw.
3. Take pain reliever, as explained in the "Pain Management Schedule"
4. Take the antibiotic (if prescribed) as directed.
5. Replace the gauze packing, if necessary.
6. Begin ice packs to the outside of your face, no longer than 20 minutes on at a time.
7. Increase your fluid intake throughout the day.

Medications

Please refer to your medication information sheets if you were given prescriptions. If you have any reaction to medications prescribed, call the doctor immediately. For mild discomfort, take Tylenol® and ibuprofen as directed. For severe pain, use the medication prescribed to you as directed. A sample schedule has been provided to you at the end of these instructions as a reference for how to take your pain medicine while recovering.

Managing Bleeding After Surgery

For the first hour after surgery:

Keep firm pressure on the surgical site with the gauze that was placed in your mouth after surgery. Remove gauze after 1 hour.

If Bleeding Continues

Take 1 piece of gauze and fold it in quarters, creating a firm pad. Place the pad over the surgical site. Use firm biting pressure where possible (extraction site), or direct finger pressure by holding the gauze (incision site). You may have to repeat this procedure several times. The bleeding should stop within 2-3 hours, but you can expect to see blood-tinged saliva for up to 24-48 hours following surgery. If bleeding is heavy, or continues after 2 hours, moisten a tea bag, place on surgical site, and apply pressure or bite firmly for 30 minutes. This usually stops the bleeding. Please remember, most bleeding is controlled and stopped with a well-positioned gauze or tea bag with direct pressure. If bleeding is heavy or continues after 24 hours, call the doctor. Do not rinse, spit, or use a straw the day of surgery, as this can cause bleeding to resume.

To Reduce Swelling

Ice for the initial 24 hours. Use ice packs applied to the face for 20-minute intervals (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off). This is the most effective way to reduce swelling. Do not exceed 20 minutes in one area as this can cause tissue injury. Swelling usually reaches its maximum 3 days following surgery. To help reduce swelling, sit semi-reclined in a reclining chair; if lying down, keep your head elevated with 2-3 pillows. Icing should be discontinued after 48 hours.

Dental Appliances / Retainers

If you have any dental appliances or retainers, please do not use them immediately after surgery unless instructed. Use of your appliance can resume 1-3 days after the procedure or as comfort allows.

Diet

Resume your diet immediately following surgery. When you get home, start with a milkshake, smoothie, or other thick liquid using a spoon, DO NOT use a straw for the first week. Your diet should be limited to cool and soft foods for the first day. Sometimes numbness from local anesthesia may last for the entire day; therefore, hot foods and liquids should be avoided, as they can cause a burn. A soft diet can be resumed as tolerated and crunchy foods such as nuts, seeds, chips, popcorn, and grains should be avoided for the first week. Most foods can be eaten as long as care is taken to avoid the surgical sites. The following are some suggested softer foods: mashed potatoes, eggs, and pastas like macaroni and cheese or spaghetti.

Oral Hygiene

You can gently rinse with water the evening of your procedure for comfort and taste. Regular rinsing with warm salt water or Closys® can begin the day after surgery. To make a saltwater rinse, add 1 teaspoon of salt to 4-5 oz of warm water. Rinse at least 3 times per day: in the morning, after meals, and before bed. Do not gargle. With certain extractions, you may have been given a plastic irrigating syringe. Begin using this syringe 5 days after your extraction if it was supplied to you. Using tap water or salt water, gently irrigate only the lower extraction site(s) once a day to remove any food debris that may persist after rinsing. Continue until all debris is removed. Do not use alcohol-based mouthwash, such as Scope® or Listerine®, as these can irritate the surgery site and slow healing. Resume brushing your teeth the day after surgery, being careful to avoid the surgical sites. It is not unusual to see traces of blood on your toothbrush or in your saliva.

Activity and Smoking/Vaping

Physical activity should be limited after oral surgery procedures. Vigorous exercise or organized sports should not be resumed until 3-5 days after surgery or as your condition allows. Please contact our office if a written excuse is needed for organized sports, gym class, or work. The nicotine from smoking and vaping can significantly delay healing and cause an increase in post-operative pain. Therefore, you should refrain from smoking as long as possible, at a minimum we recommend 2 weeks.

Stitches

Stitches that have been placed are usually dissolvable and will fall out on their own within the first week. If you have non dissolvable sutures an appointment will be scheduled for you to have your sutures removed within 1-3 weeks. It is not unusual for one or more sutures to loosen and fall out before dissolving, especially in moving areas of your mouth, such as the tongue or cheek areas. If the stitches come out and the wound opens and creates a hole, it is typically not of concern unless there is excessive bleeding. Fortunately, incisions in the mouth do heal very quickly, and any wound that does open will close naturally.

Follow-Up Visits

Your surgeon will call to check in with you around 1 week after your procedure. If a follow-up visit is necessary, an appointment would have been scheduled for you. Post-operative appointments are always available. Please call the office during business hours if you would like to be seen or have any concerns. We are always here for you.

Typical Recovery

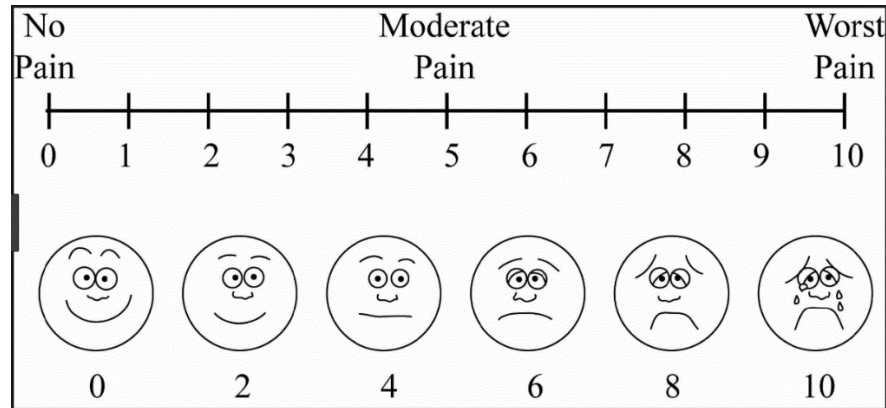
With most oral surgery procedures, post-operative discomfort can actually worsen between the third and sixth days. This discomfort is considered normal and should be managed with your pain medication. If you have significant discomfort, even with pain medication, or you cannot tolerate the pain medication, please call the office.

When to Call the Doctor

If there is a drug reaction, significant swelling, persistent pain or bleeding, or any other unusual reactions, call the office immediately. Additionally, if you have any questions during the post-operative period, do not hesitate to call. There is an on-call doctor to respond to emergencies at all times when the office is closed.

Pain Management Schedule

(Ideal pain level with medications should be 3-5 out of 10)



1. Ibuprofen (ie Advil® or Motrin®) take 600-800mg every 6 hours

Wait 3 hours from surgery to start first dose (timing best with food at breakfast, lunch, dinner, and before bed)

Wait 3 hours then

2. Tylenol® regular strength

(over the counter 2 x 325mg tablets every 6 hours)
(take three hours after breakfast, lunch and dinner)

Alternate regular strength **Tylenol®** every **3 hours** with **Ibuprofen (ie Advil® or Motrin®)** so you are **alternating** the medication **3 hours apart** (this reduces peaks and troughs in pain).

For **moderate to severe pain** (>6 on the pain scale) if the above two medications are not adequate then opioid pain medication would be indicated: **substitute one of the Tylenol® tablets for your prescribed opioid pain medication (ie. Ultram, Norco, Tylenol® #3, or Percocet).**

Be aware that most opioid pain medication contains Tylenol®, it is **important to not exceed a total of 3000 mg of Tylenol® in a 24hr period.**

It is also **important to not exceed 3200 mg of Ibuprofen (ie Advil® or Motrin®) in a 24hr period.**

The above regimen is a reference; however, it may need to be modified depending on your individual circumstances. Please make sure your medication regimen is allowable provided any allergies or medical conditions that you may have.