

ORAL SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE CARE

The proper care following oral surgery will hasten recovery and prevent complications.

1. **BLEEDING:** Following extractions some bleeding is to be expected the first day, usually slowing by bedtime and done by morning. For heavier bleeding, place a gauze pad or tea bag over the bleeding area and bite down firmly for one-half hour. Repeat as necessary until bleeding slows. Light bleeding requires no gauze pressure. Please call the office if excessive bleeding persists.
2. **SWELLING:** After surgical extractions; an ice bag or chopped ice wrapped in a towel should be applied to the operated area, ½ hour on and ½ hour off for 4 to 5 hours. Elevate the head when at rest during the first 24 hours (i.e. 2-3 pillows). Swelling may increase for 2 days after surgery, and then should improve after 7-10 days.
3. **RINSING/BRUSHING:** **DO NOT RINSE MOUTH OR BRUSH TEETH TODAY.** Tomorrow rinse your mouth gently every 3 to 4 hours (especially after meals) using ¼ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water. Continue rinses for several days. Resume brushing the day after surgery as well.
4. **PAIN:** For mild to average pain use Advil (ibuprofen) or Tylenol (acetaminophen); for more severe pain, use the prescription pain medication as prescribed. Pain usually diminishes after 7-10 days. In some people prescription pain medication may cause stomach upset or nausea, more severe on an empty stomach. If severe, stop the medication immediately, and nausea should resolve within 24 hours. **DO NOT DRIVE OR OPERATE HAZARDOUS MACHINERY WHILE TAKING PRESCRIPTION PAIN MEDICATION.**
5. **FOOD:** A light, soft diet is advisable during the first 24 hours. Also, no hot liquids or straws during this period. Then continue with a soft diet for several days ("pasta" consistency foods are perfect). Keep away from foods that form hard, sharp pieces for one week (such as chips or peanuts).
6. **BONY EDGES:** Small sharp bone fragments may work up through the gums during healing. If painful or persistent, please return to the office for simple removal.
7. **IF YOU HAVE HAD INTRAVENOUS ANESTHESIA:** Your escort should care for you the remainder of the day. You should not leave the house, stand, or walk unassisted for 24 hours after surgery as you could faint and injure yourself. Lie flat if you feel faint, and drink plenty of fluids.
8. **IF ANY UNUSUAL SYMPTOMS, CALL THE OFFICE.** In general, any significant turn for the worse in pain or swelling after 2-3 days should be checked. For after hour emergencies, an oral surgeon is on call, please call back every half hour in the unusual event your call is not promptly returned.