

Home Instructions Following Oral Surgery

YOUR FIRST POST-OPERATIVE DAY

1. For the first twenty-four hours following surgery, **DO NOT** rinse out your mouth, spit or use a straw. If you are a smoker, refrain from smoking for the first twenty four hours.
2. Keeping the surgical area well iced reduces some post-operative swelling. An ice bag should be applied to the face in the area of the surgery, 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off, for the rest of the day. If you are directed to do so, continue applying ice for up to 24-36 hours.
3. For the first twenty-four hours following surgery **DO NOT** eat or drink anything **HOT** in temperature or spicy. A cold, soft diet is best at this time. (Sherbet, ice cream, jello, yogurt). You may be directed to let ice chips melt in your mouth. It is important that you drink plenty of fluids.
4. If you are discharged from the office with gauze in your mouth, remove it when you arrive home. Slight oozing or pinkish saliva may be noted for up to 24 hours following the surgery and is normal. If the area starts actively bleeding, place enough gauze over the site and bite firmly for 15 minutes. Your teeth should not touch when you have enough gauze in place. Repeat this procedure until active bleeding stops. Once the bleeding has stopped, leave the gauze out. If oozing persists after using gauze, moisten a regular tea bag with warm water, squeeze it out and place in a piece of gauze. Then place the gauze over the surgical site, bite down gently for 10 minutes. Repeat 3 to 4 times if necessary.
5. Pain and varying degrees of discomfort are to be expected. A prescription, if needed has been provided by your doctor. If discomfort persists following 3 or 4 doses, contact your doctor for an adjustment of your medication. If nausea occurs it can be controlled with over the counter Dramamine. If a prescription is given for antibiotics, be sure to take the entire prescription as directed on the bottle.
6. The corners of your mouth and lips should be kept lightly lubricated with vaseline.
7. Sleep or rest with your head elevated. Do not lie down flat.

YOUR SECOND TO THE SEVENTH POST-OPERATIVE DAY

8. Restrict your activities. No bending, lifting, running or exercise for 2 to 3 days following surgery. Participation in sports should be discussed with your doctor.
9. **After** the first twenty-four hours, it is very important that you start rinsing. This will be beneficial to your healing and make you more comfortable. Rinse your mouth with 8 oz. of warm water and ½ teaspoon salt after meals and before bed (more often if possible). At first, rinse very gently, just bathing the surgical areas. Increase the vigor of your rinsing as the week progresses. You should continue rinsing for at least one week. Start brushing gently on post-operative day#2.
10. Heat is now most beneficial to any swollen areas. Apply warm moist heat to the face. Do this **ONLY** after you have finished applying ice as directed by the doctor. (usually 36 hours after surgery)
11. Swelling tends to increase for 72 hours: do not become alarmed if there is more swelling today than yesterday.
12. A semi-soft diet is best tolerated (soup, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes). Avoid foods with seeds, popcorn, crispy crusts, etc. Continue to drink plenty of fluids.
13. If you have dissolvable stitches in your mouth, they will come out on their own. Many of them will come out on the first and second day. Non-dissolvable stitches will be removed by the doctor 7-10 days.

In the case of unusual problems or questions, please call the doctor's office. The doctor can be contacted by radio-signal via his answering service at any time. If the doctor is out when you call, leave the message with the answering service and he will return your call.

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