



SOUTHWEST SEATTLE ORAL SURGERY

General Post-Operative Instructions

We are committed to providing the same quality of care following procedures that began during your initial visit. To that end, please refer to some general postoperative guidelines below, and by all means, CALL at any hour of any day to report any continuing problem (909)-639-8166.

1. Some degree of discomfort and pain may arise as numbness subsides. Take the prescribed pain medicine before the numbness wears off but **AFTER** eating some food. Please read the pain medication insert for your maximum daily dose. Any pain medication can cause nausea and vomiting, but this effect will be minimized when taken on a full stomach.
2. Do not disturb the area of surgery except to clean. The first stages of healing are aided by placing tissues at rest. **Avoid vigorous chewing, spitting, or rinsing as initial healing may be delayed, active bleeding restarted, or infection introduced.**
3. A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. This bleeding may continue throughout the first several days. For the first hour, keep firm pressure on the area of surgery by biting on the gauze sponge placed in your mouth at the office. If bleeding persists, continue pressure on a fresh sponge for an additional 30 minutes to an hour making sure that the gauze packing is compressing the wound. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a black tea bag (soaked in very hot water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) for 20-30 minutes. Do NOT sleep or eat with gauze in your mouth.
If active bleeding should recur at any time, gently rinse your mouth with cold water and apply a fresh gauze sponge to the bleeding site. Firm pressure for 15-30 minutes usually controls the problem. Should active bleeding persist, please call the office.
4. LIMIT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY during the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Over exertion may lead to postoperative bleeding and discomfort. When you lie down, keep your head elevated on a pillow slightly higher than the rest of your body.
5. SWELLING related to the surgical procedure usually develops during the first 12-24 hours following surgery, often increasing on the second to third day. It should begin to subside after the third day. Swelling can be minimized a great deal by wearing an ice pack with pressure on the side of your face for 30-45 minutes every hour while you are awake during the first 24 hours following the surgery. Anti-inflammatory medications, such as Motrin or Advil or Ibuprofen, also help decrease swelling. Keep your head elevated for the first 3 days to keep the swelling to a minimum. Swelling may be greater in the morning when you first awaken.
6. FLUID INTAKE IS IMPORTANT. We suggest you start with clear fluids. Once your stomach has settled, you can advance to other fluids such as broth, soups, or juices. Also avoid hot liquids until the numbness has worn off, and the bleeding has stopped. It is important to drink plenty of fluids.
7. AVOID USING A STRAW while the wound is healing as this creates suction on your wounds.
8. FOOD SELECTION is largely a matter of your choice. Soft, cool foods that require little or no chewing are most easily tolerated at this time. A nutritious diet throughout your

healing process is most important to your comfort and temperament. Hungry people become irritable and less able to deal with the discomfort which can follow surgery. Since you will be taking medication, it is important to remember that eating can prevent nausea or stomach upset sometimes associated with medications. Once your stomach is settled, soups, broiled fish, stewed chicken, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, and cooked vegetables can be added to your diet as your comfort indicates. Ensure, Carnation Instant Breakfast and/or yogurt supply excellent added nutrition. Do not chew anything until the numbness wears off. AVOID nuts, popcorn, and any foods with seeds.

9. Take any special medication such as ANTIBIOTICS we have prescribed on the specified dosing schedule. Yogurt with active cultures or acidophilus should be taken while on antibiotics to prevent diarrhea. It is important to take the antibiotics to completion. If you are given antibiotics and take birth control pills, you should be aware that the birth control pill may become ineffective, therefore take appropriate precautions.
10. Take any regularly scheduled medication (for diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.) on your regular schedule unless specifically advised to do otherwise.
11. TRY TO AVOID SMOKING COMPLETELY, as it cuts blood flow from the wound, sabotaging the healing process and may also contribute to delayed wound healing and infection.
12. DO NOT DRIVE OR OPERATE ANY VEHICLE OR DRINK ALCOHOL for 24 hours following surgery if you have had intravenous sedation or general anesthesia, or if you are taking prescription pain medication.
13. IF YOU WERE INFORMED THAT A SINUS COMMUNICATION OCCURRED DURING SURGERY, as a result of the close relationship between the roots of your upper teeth and your sinuses, or if you have had surgery that involved work near your sinuses or in your sinuses, please follow these instructions:
 - DO NOT blow your nose.
 - DO NOT sneeze through your nose. If the urge to sneeze arises, sneeze with your mouth open.
 - DO NOT smoke or use a straw.
 - AVOID swimming and strenuous exercise for at least one week.
 - It is not uncommon to have a slight amount of bleeding from the nose for several days.
 - Please remember that occasionally a second procedure may be required if there is a persistent sinus communication.

The Day Following Surgery and Thereafter

On the morning after surgery, gentle warm salt water rinses up to three times a day can be soothing to the wounds. Resume gentle brushing and your regular oral hygiene as soon as possible. Do not avoid brushing the area as this will cause more inflammation in the area. You can also use the syringe provided to gently rinse food out of extraction sockets starting on the 5th day after surgery.

Syringe Instructions: Patients will be given a syringe to take home and be used to clean the surgical area. You are to do so:

- Fill the syringe with the mouth rinse and or water.
 - Place the syringe towards the back of the mouth
 - Pull the cheek aside and place the syringe into the surgical site.
 - Gently flush out any food or debris in the surgical socket.
- Please note that it is very important to keep the area clean and flush

Swelling and soreness cause stiffness of the jaw muscles that usually lasts at least 1 week after surgery. Mobility can be regained by applying a warm moist towel to the affected areas and stretching the muscles with jaw opening exercises multiple times daily.

A soft diet should be maintained until your wounds have healed to closure, especially if lower impacted teeth were removed. Bruising marks may appear on the skin of the face during the first few days after surgery. Moist heat application will help relieve this condition.

If you need assistance over the weekend, it is helpful if you call around 8:00 AM, so that we can arrange to see you in one of our offices if necessary. We appreciate your patience as we do our best to keep you comfortable during the healing process.

Faithful compliance with these instructions will add to your comfort and hasten your recovery. Be sure to follow these instructions carefully. Only in this way will you avoid the complications which lead to unnecessary discomfort and delayed recovery. Should any undue reaction or complications arise, notify the office immediately.

If you need to contact us after office hours, please call the office.

We make every attempt to answer as promptly as possible. Occasionally, your messages do not reach us. If you do not hear from the doctor on call within one-half hour, please call back again.