



GREEN & JONES
ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

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Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS TO SURGERY PATIENTS

Following any oral surgery procedure, there are several important instructions for you to follow to insure proper healing and to avoid problems. **Please read and follow these items carefully.**

- 1. BLEEDING** ~ Some bleeding is expected, and this may continue for up to 24 hours. **BITE ON GAUZE FOR ONE HOUR.** Change to fresh wet/damp gauze **each hour** as long as oozing continues. Be sure the gauze is placed directly over the site of bleeding, and firm biting pressure is applied. A moistened tea bag may be substituted for gauze if oozing persists after 4 to 5 gauze changes. Blood tinged saliva often appears as excessive bleeding, but rarely is this significant.
- 2. PAIN** - Following any oral surgical procedure, one may experience pain and discomfort once the local anesthetic has worn off. Unless it is contraindicated, the patient should take Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, generic) 400-600mg (2 or 3 over-the-counter tablets) as soon as possible after surgery. This should be continued every 6 hours **BY THE CLOCK** for 48-72 hours. Prescription pain medicine may also be taken as needed according to the instruction with food and/or liquids. Drowsiness may be a side effect, so caution must be observed by the patient.
- 3. SWELLING** ~ This also is a normal event following surgery and will reach a maximum in about 72 hours. Head elevation on 2-3 pillows will help minimize the swelling. Ice packs should be applied for the first 24-48 hours. Then warm washcloth compresses or heating pad may be applied intermittently for the next several days. Care must be taken not to freeze or burn the skin during this time.
- 4. NAUSEA** ~ Many patients will experience nausea and vomiting soon after surgery. This is due to either the general anesthetic, the pain medicine, or a small amount of swallowed blood. Clear liquids such as ginger ale, 7-Up, soup broth should be taken in small sips and this may need to be repeated if vomiting continues. If nausea has not decreased by the following day, notify our office.
- 5. ORAL CARE** - Do not spit, rinse mouth, use a straw, or brush teeth until the next day after surgery. Gentle oral rinsing with one teaspoon of salt in a small glass of **warm water** should be done 6-10 times a day for about one week. A clean mouth promotes good healing. The teeth must be kept clean by brushing with a soft toothbrush 2-3 times daily. Avoid the surgical site, but clean the teeth in the area carefully. **SMOKING IS PROHIBITED** for 48 hours after surgery, because smoking will **delay healing** and increase the chance of infection. If chlorhexidine mouthrinse was prescribed, please begin swishing and gently spitting on the first day after surgery. If you were given a syringe, you may begin to use it to gently flush debris with water or chlorhexidine (if prescribed) out of the extraction sites beginning one week after surgery.
- 6. DIET** ~ Proper nutrition is important to assure rapid and effective healing. Immediately after surgery, the patient should have **liquids only** (warm soup, juice, milk, soft drinks) for **12 hours**. No chewing until the numbness has entirely gone. Soft foods (cooked vegetables, scrambled eggs, or other food of similar consistency) may then be given. Beginning the next day, the diet may then be advanced gradually to regular foods as the patient tolerates. Sharp foods (potato chips, popcorn) should be avoided for at least one (1) week. It is likely that the patient will be unable to open his/her mouth fully. This is due to the swelling and will resolve as the swelling resolves and the more the jaws are exercised.
- 7.** If excessive bleeding continues after several attempts of biting on gauze or if you are experiencing excessive pain that your prescription isn't controlling or if swelling increases and becomes painful after the first 48 hours, call our office.