

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

FOLLOWING MINOR ORAL SURGERY PROCEDURES

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS COMPLETELY AND CAREFULLY



This is meant to highlight some key post-operative care that will be helpful over the next few days. Remember that the height of discomfort is in the first 3 days and each day thereafter you will steadily feel better. Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply.

DAY OF SURGERY

Biting pressure is important to stop the bleeding and develop a good blood clot. If active bleeding persists after 20-30 minutes of biting pressure place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the site for another 30-60 minutes.

If **bleeding** still persists bite on a tea bag that has been soaked in hot water and squeezed to damp-dry. Bite down for 20-30 minutes.

No vigorous rinsing today. Avoid creating any force from spitting as well.

Swelling can be minimized by wrapping a cold pack or frozen peas/corn in a towel. Apply to your face/cheek for 20 minutes on / 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours. After the first 24 hours you will want to switch to moist heat, using a warm compress.

Nausea can be caused by your pain medication. To prevent or minimize this, eat food 15 minutes prior to taking your medication. Take medication with a large amount of water. Food suggestions include ice cream or milkshake, cheese, yogurt or avocado.

Pain medication works best if started while your mouth is still numb. It is advised to go straight to the pharmacy and start pain management as soon as possible. The most severe discomfort is usually within the first 6 hours after the anesthetic wears off.

Diet: It is important not to skip meals. Stick to what is comfortable to eat and you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids during the first 24 hours after surgery.

FIRST 24 HOURS

You may find blood on your pillow in the morning. This is normal.

You may start to bruise on your skin, have soreness or stiffness in your jaws which is reduced by applying a **warm compress: 20 minutes on / 20 minutes off** using a hot water bottle, moist hot towels or a heating pad.

Begin **gently rinsing with warm salt water** (1/4 tsp salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water). Rinse with this solution 4 times a day for 6-8 days. This will help keep the surgical site clear of debris.

Begin your **normal oral hygiene routine** within the bounds of comfort.

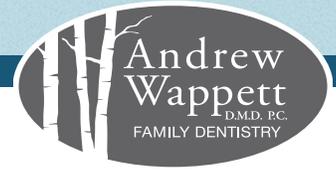
END OF FIRST WEEK

The most significant pain should be resolved, although local discomfort may persist for 2-3 more weeks. Swelling usually is resolved 7-10 days after surgery. Bruising may persist for another 2 weeks. If your jaw is still sore you should work on stretching your jaw open and applying local heat. You should be back to your normal oral hygiene routine. Your diet should be back to normal. Your bite may feel off. This could be from jaw stiffness or slight movement of the teeth surrounding the extraction site. This generally returns to normal in another week or so.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



What can I eat?

Start with a soft food diet for a few days following surgery. Things like soup, bananas, mashed potatoes, and smoothies are great for allowing the surgical site to heal. Avoid crunchy, sharp or sticky foods that are hard or require a lot of chewing.



When can I brush my teeth and rinse?

It is okay to brush your teeth. You want to keep your mouth clean. You can begin to gently rinse after 24 hours with salt water.



What should my socket look like?

You will have temporary bleeding that leads to blood clot formation. This is the first step in healing. This healing clot will have a white appearance surrounded by tissue that is inflamed and darker red. As healing progresses, your gums should return to the color of the surrounding tissue.



What will happen with my sutures?

If sutures were placed they may begin to unravel after 2-3 days. This is normal. If loose ends are bothersome feel free to trim them yourself with scissors (don't tug) or call our office. Your sutures will resorb on their own within 7-10 days.



How do I take my pain medication?

Take your medications with food to avoid nausea. Remember to stagger the medications prescribed. The purpose of this is to maintain high levels of pain medication in your blood stream. Refer to the guidelines on the back side of the printed post-op instructions you were given at your appointment.

Before the numbness wears off from your appointment you should start taking the narcotic medication.

An effective approach for managing lingering pain is to alternate Ibuprofen (Motrin) and Acetaminophen (Tylenol).

1 TO 3 OR 4 DAYS AFTER SURGERY TO MANAGE MORE INTENSE PAIN

- Start with narcotic (Norco, Percocet, etc.)
- 3-4 hours later take the anti-inflammatory (Ibuprofen, Motrin, etc.)
- 3-4 hours later take the narcotic
- 3-4 hours later take the anti-inflammatory
- 3-4 hours later take the narcotic

4 TO 8 DAYS AFTER SURGERY TO MANAGE MODERATE PAIN

- Start with the anti-inflammatory (Ibuprofen, Motrin, etc.)
- 6-8 hours later take the Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- 6-8 hours later take the anti-inflammatory
- 6-8 hours later take the Acetaminophen
- 6-8 hours later take the anti-inflammatory



Smoking



Straws



Hot Liquids



Alcohol