

PLEASE READ BOTH SIDES OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY!

Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification.

DAY OF SURGERY

FIRST HOUR

Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them for the first hour unless the bleeding is being controlled. If active bleeding persists after one hour, place enough new gauze to obtain firm pressure over the surgical site for another 30 – 60 minutes. The gauze may be changed as necessary and may be slightly moistened and/or fluffed for more comfortable positioning.

EXERCISE CARE

Do not disturb the surgical area today. **DO NOT** rinse vigorously, spit, or probe the are with any objects or your fingers. You may brush your teeth gently. **DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 72 hours, since it is very detrimental to healing.

OOZING

Intermittent bleeding or oozing is normal. It may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the surgical areas and biting down **FIRMLY for 30 – 60** minutes.

STEADY BLEEDING

Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between your teeth rather than exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning fresh packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute gauze for a dry tea bag for 30 – 45 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

SWELLING

Often there is some swelling associated with oral surgery. You can minimize this by using a cold pack or ice bag wrapped in a towel and applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the first 10 hours after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed. After 24 hours, it is usually best to switch from ice to moist heat to the same areas,

PAIN

Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication, and if you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you will be able to manage any discomfort better. Effects of pain medicines vary widely among individuals. If you do not achieve adequate relief, you may supplement each pill with an analgesic such as Advil (Ibuprofen). Some people may even require two of the pain pills at one time during early stages (but that may add to the risk of upset stomach). Remember that the most severe discomfort is usually within the first six hours after the anesthetic wears off, after that your need of medicine should lessen.

NAUSEA

Nausea is not an uncommon event after surgery, and it is sometimes caused by stronger pain medicines. Nausea may be reduced by preceding each pill with a small amount of soft food, then taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep taking clear **non-carbonated** fluids and minimize the pain medication, but call us if you do not feel better or if repeated vomiting is a problem

SHARP EDGES

If you feel sharp edges in the surgical areas with your tongue, it is probably the bony walls that originally supported the teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the first week or two after surgery. They are not pieces of tooth and, if necessary, we will remove them. Please call the office if you are concerned.

DIET

Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Temperature of the food doesn't matter, but avoid extremely hot foods. It is sometimes advisable, but not required; to confine the first day's intake to bland liquids or pureed foods (creamed soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.). Avoid foods like chips, nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you can progress to solid foods at your own pace. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. Avoid carbonated beverages for 4 – 5 days. Do NOT chew gum for 2 weeks. If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits as much as possible and follow instructions from us or your physician regarding your insulin schedule.

*****SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR SINUS OPENING*****

You have a small opening into your sinus from the root of the tooth. These instructions will help keep this area closed until healing takes place.

Do not blow your nose for three weeks, do not try to sneeze; open your mouth widely if you have to sneeze. **Do not** use a straw or smoke.

Do not rinse your mouth vigorously for one week. It is not unusual to have a slight amount of bleeding from the nose for several days. If you get a cold, call our office for further instructions!!

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

MOUTH RINSES

No vigorous rinsing of your mouth should be performed on the day of surgery as this, will dissolve the clotted blood and cause additional bleeding. Begin gentle rinsing 24 hours AFTER surgery. Keeping your mouth clean following surgery is essential. Use one-quarter teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and GENTLY rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat at least two or three times daily, particularly after meals, for the next five days. Do not use Listerine or other alcohol based mouth rinses as this may cause dry sockets.

BRUSHING

Begin your normal oral hygiene routine the day after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing of all areas, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

HOT APPLICATIONS

Apply warm compresses to the skin overlying areas of swelling (hot water bottle, moist hot towels, heating pad) for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off to help soothe those tender areas. This will also help decrease swelling and stiffness.

SYRINGE

If you were given an irrigating syringe at your first office check-up visit, start using it the third day after surgery to keep sockets clean. Fill it with warm water and irrigate any open sockets gently, especially after eating.

DRY SOCKETS

Normal healing after extraction should be as follows: The first and second day of surgery are usually the most uncomfortable and there is some degree of swelling and stiffness. The third day you will usually be far more comfortable and, although still swollen, you can usually begin a more substantial diet. From the fourth day on **GRADUAL, STEADY IMPROVEMENT** should mark the remainder of your post-operative course. If a **DRY SOCKET** occurs (loss of blood clot from socket, usually on the 3rd to 5th day), there us a noticeable, distinct, persistent throbbing pain in the jaw, often radiating toward the ear and forward along the jaw cause other teeth to ache. If you do not see steady improvement during the first few days after surgery, do not suffer needlessly. Call the office and report symptoms so you can be seen as soon as possible.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have any questions about your progress, please call the office where you had your surgery. Please try to call during office hours, however, a 24-hour answering service is available for after hours to contact Dr. Cooke. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response.