

Kevin R McPherson DDS

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORAL SURGERY AND TOOTH REMOVAL

This document contains basic post-operative instructions to make your recovery as comfortable as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office.

PAIN

Some degree of discomfort and pain arises as the numbness subsides. We recommend that you start taking a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory once you arrive home.

Advil/Ibuprofen/Motrin are such medications and should be taken as directed on the bottle. If you are unable to take anti-inflammatory medications, take Tylenol or acetaminophen as directed on the bottle. If the pain is not relieved, then you may take the prescribed pain medication as directed. All pain medications have the ability to cause nausea and vomiting, so try to have some food in your stomach before you take them.

Do not wait for the pain to become unbearable before using some form of pain medication, as then it will be more difficult to control. Moderate to severe pain usually does not last longer than 24-72 hours, **sometimes peaking on the 3rd postoperative day**. Relief should begin on the 4th post-operative day.

BLEEDING

Expect minor bleeding or **OOZING** from the operative site. **This bleeding may continue throughout the first day**. Keep firm pressure on the surgical site by biting on a gauze sponge for 30 minutes at a time until bleeding subsides. Once the oozing has slowed down, try to avoid placing gauze or any other irritant near the surgical site as this will only lead to continued bleeding and discomfort. Biting on a moist tea bag wrapped in gauze may help control persistent oozing from the surgical site.

If active bleeding should recur at any time, carefully 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.

THE SURGICAL SITE

The first stages of healing are aided by allowing tissues to rest. Avoid vigorous chewing, excessive spitting, or rinsing for the first 24 hours as initial healing may be delayed, active bleeding restarted, or infection introduced.

AVOID USING A STRAW to ingest liquids as it may cause the blood clot to dislodge and delay healing.

Try to avoid smoking completely, as it tends to slow the healing process and may also contribute to infection & prolonged discomfort.

Do not worry about the stitches if they start to come out. The sutures usually dissolve in 5-7 days and **typically do not require removal**.

SWELLING

Swelling usually develops during the first 12-24 hours following surgery, often **peaking on the 3rd post-operative day**. It should begin to subside by the 4th day after your surgery.

Swelling can be minimized by placing an ice pack on the affected side at 30 minute intervals during the first 48 hours after surgery.

Any swelling, soreness, or stiffness in the jaw muscles can be relieved by applying a warm moist towel to the affected side of the face several times a day. Moist heat should be used after the first 48 hours.

ACTIVITY

Limit activity during the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Excessive exertion may lead to postoperative bleeding and discomfort. When you lie down, keep your head elevated at least 45 degrees on a pillow.

Do not drive an automobile or operate any potentially dangerous machinery while taking prescription pain medication.

DIET

FOOD SELECTION is largely a matter of your choice. **Soft, cool foods** that require little or no chewing are most easily tolerated. Avoid spicy, hot, or crunchy foods.

ORAL HYGIENE

Start cleaning your mouth 24 hours after surgery by using warm salt water rinses (1/4 teaspoon table salt with a cup of water). Repeat 3 times daily for one week. **BRUSH** your teeth starting on the first postoperative day being careful not to irritate the surgical site.

YOUR MEDICATIONS

Take any regularly scheduled medication on your regular schedule unless advised to do otherwise.

**IF YOU FEEL THAT HEALING IS NOT PROGRESSING IN A NORMAL FASHION,
CONTACT OUR OFFICE:**

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