

Tooth Extraction Post-Operative Instructions

Telephone (256) 329-8401

It is important to follow post-operative instructions after oral surgery or recovery could be delayed. Please follow the instructions below unless otherwise indicated.

When you leave the office: Pick up the prescription, go home, and get settled.

After Surgery: Keep gauze in place for 1 hour after you leave the office. After an hour, remove the gauze, drink or eat something cold, and take the first pain pill. (You should be numb for 2-3 hours when you leave the office and it is important to take the pain pill before the numbness wears off.) If bleeding persists, place a new piece of gauze and close to hold pressure over the extraction sites. An hour or two after the first pain pill remove the gauze, have something to eat and drink and take the first antibiotic pill. (Make sure to have something to eat and drink before taking any medications to avoid nausea or vomiting)

Diet: For the first few days after surgery stick to cold, cool, or luke-warm soft foods or liquids. Avoid hot foods and liquids and avoid excessive chewing.

Rest: For the first 48 hours after surgery: keep the head elevated, no bending, or heavy lifting. Someone should monitor the patient closely while getting up and down due to the risk of fainting and falling.

Medications: Your prescriptions may include a pain medication and antibiotic. The recommended dosing for OTC pain medications is 800mg of ibuprofen or advil **AND** 1000mg of Acetaminophen or Tylenol. Take all pills together with a caffeine drink of choice. This can be taken every 6 hours for pain control.

The 3 "S"s: No smoking, spitting, or drinking through straws for 1 week after the surgery to minimize risk of dry socket.

Rinsing: The day after surgery, rinse with warm, salt water (½ tsp. salt per 8 oz. water). You may also begin carefully brushing your teeth

Swelling: Swelling usually peaks on the third day after surgery and may persist for up to a week. To help minimize swelling, keep the head elevated by sleeping in a recliner chair or propped up on the sofa with heavy sofa pillows. Apply ice packs to the side of the face for 20-30 minutes ON, 20-30 minutes OFF while awake. Do this for the first two days after the surgery. If swelling is significant, you may start moist heat on the third day after surgery.

Bleeding: Some oozing is expected and this can last up to 24 hours after the procedure. Normal oozing is usually a little bit of blood mixed with lots of saliva. Gauze should be left in place for at least 1 hour without disruption while closing the jaws together holding firm pressure. Replace gauze as needed. If bleeding continues around the gauze, reposition the gauze all the way behind the teeth or over the extraction sites. If bleeding persists, a tea bag can be placed over the extraction site and pressure held.

Birth Control Pills: Antibiotics can reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills and could lead to an unexpected pregnancy. Take additional precautions to prevent pregnancy during the cycle in which antibiotics are used.

Other Situations: If a rash or itching begins after you take your medications, STOP the medications immediately. For rash or itching, use over the counter Benadryl and call the office. For difficulty breathing or other emergent concerns, go directly to the closest Emergency Room and they will notify our office.

TMJ Soreness: This is a problem with the muscles and joints of the jaw. Symptoms may include headaches, earaches, or jaw stiffness, usually occurring after the second or third day. This can be aggravated by excessive strain on the jaw from chewing, clenching or grinding. Use of a moist heat pack (starting on the 3rd day after surgery) will help with soreness/pain. Continue the soft diet. If pain persists for more than 3 days after the surgery, please call our office.

Nitrous Oxide: Because Nitrous Oxide is used in the form of a gas during dental procedures, once discontinued in the office setting, the gas is almost immediately dissipated from the body within seconds. There are no prolonged side effects when using Nitrous Oxide, and normal activity can be resumed post dental procedure. However, the main concern lies with the effects of local anesthesia, and caution should be geared towards prevention of lip, tongue, and cheek biting as instructed by the dentist.