

Drs. Phipps, Levin, Hebeka, and Associates General Dentistry

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Oral Surgery postoperative Instructions

Swelling-should be expected for the first week after surgery and should not be a cause for concern. For the first 24 hours, apply an ice pack to the outside of the face on the side of surgery for 30 minutes on, then 30 minutes off. Repeat this as often as possible.

After the first 24 hours, alternate an ice pack for 30 minutes with a warm, moist towel or warm water bottle for 30 minutes. Any bruising which may occur, should disappear in a few days.

Bleeding- It is not unusual to have a small amount of oozing for the first 24 hours following surgery. To control bleeding, place a folded gauze pad directly over the surgical site then bite and hold with firm pressure for 1 hour. Change the gauze as needed. It may take several cycles of this to control the area. No spitting, smoking, using a straw, or rinsing the area for 24 hours, which can cause bleeding to persist.

Pain- The use of over-the-counter pain medicine such as Tylenol or ibuprofen will take care of most discomfort you may experience. In some cases, a prescription pain medication will be written for you. Please use as directed. In some cases, these medications could cause drowsiness or nausea. You should not drink alcohol, drive, or operate machinery while using those that cause drowsiness.

Diet- A soft food diet should be followed for the first week after surgery. If you have had surgery on only one side of the mouth, please eat what you wish on the unaffected side. Drink lots of fluids following treatment. Eating prior to taking medications will coat the stomach, helping to avoid nausea, which can be associated with some medicines.

Oral Hygiene- A clean mouth will heal better. On the day of surgery, do not rinse or brush around the surgical area. The day following surgery, rinse with warm salt water (1 teaspoon added to 8 oz. water) or an antiseptic mouth rinse (Listerine) three to four times a day until healing is complete. You may return to brushing your teeth the day following surgery.

Sutures- You may have had sutures (stitches) placed today. They may be a dissolvable type which do not need to be removed, or a silk type which will need to be removed one-week post-operatively. You will need an appointment to remove silk sutures.

Impacted teeth- The removal of impacted teeth generally involves more surgery than the extraction of erupted teeth. You may have considerable swelling and tightness of the jaw muscles, which may make it difficult to open your mouth wide for a few weeks. You may also notice an earache, sore throat, aching of adjacent teeth, or a feeling of numbness or tingling of the lip or tongue. This should resolve over time, but please inform us if it does not resolve within a few weeks.

Smoking- If you smoke, please try to refrain for several days following surgery. Smokers tend to heal very slowly and have many more postoperative complications.

Unusual Conditions- If any of the following occur, please contact the doctor immediately.

Fever over 101 orally, severe bright red bleeding that cannot be controlled, or severe hard swelling after the 3rd postoperative day. Also if there is a rash, severe vomiting, or any other suspected reaction to your medications or if you experience prolonged or severe pain that is not relieved after several doses of the pain medication.