

# Post-Op Surgery Instructions

Care of your mouth after oral surgery has an important effect on healing. Swelling, discomfort, and restricted jaw function are expected and should not cause alarm. These may be minimized by following the instructions below. Please read them carefully. It is strongly urged that they be followed.

## Swelling

- For two to three days after surgery, keep head elevated with a couple of pillows when lying down.
- To reduce swelling, place bags of ice or frozen peas/carrots on cheeks as soon as you arrive home. Continue using cold therapy for three days after surgery during waking hours.
- On the fourth day after surgery, begin using heat therapy by applying moist heat to your face for 20-minute intervals. This will help with residual pain and jaw stiffness.

## Food and Drink

- Drink a lot of fluids for the first three days. Do not use straws and do not choose soda, green tea or herbal tea for one week.
- Eat very soft foods on the first day after surgery. Foods like mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs and mac and cheese served at room temperature are good options.

## Bleeding

- Change gauze at the surgical site every hour until bleeding stops. Gauze should be slightly dampened in cold water prior to using. Remove gauze when eating or drinking.
- Bleeding will be heavier for the first 6–8 hours, but mild oozing is not unusual for the first 24 hours. Chewing or frequent talking may prolong bleeding.
- If moderate bleeding continues after six hours, place a moistened tea bag wrapped in gauze on the extraction site for one hour. Repeat this twice if necessary. If moderate bleeding continues or you have heavy bleeding, contact the on-call NWOMS surgeon.

## Medication

- As soon as you get home, take 400 to 600 mg of Motrin/ibuprofen. Continue taking the ibuprofen every 6 hours for 3 days. Tylenol/acetaminophen may be taken on top of and in addition to ibuprofen. **If there is a contraindication such as allergy, stomach ulcer, use of a blood thinner, or already on a prescription anti-inflammatory medicine, please disregard instructions for ibuprofen use.**
- Use prescription pain and anti-nausea medications **if needed** and as prescribed by your oral surgeon.
- If prescribed by your oral surgeon, begin using antibiotics later on the day of surgery after food has been consumed.
- Begin using the prescription mouth rinse as instructed by your surgeon — either on the evening of surgery or the day after surgery. Hold the rinse for 30 seconds at the extraction site and spit. Do not swish the rinse.
- Refrain from using alcohol, marijuana and recreational drugs as this may cause serious side effects, adverse reactions with medications and impede recovery.

## Hygiene

- You may begin brushing your teeth the day after surgery. Do not swish after brushing. Gently wiggle your head from side to side so that the toothpaste mixes with the water, and then let it drool out.
- If lower teeth were extracted, examine the site on the fourth (4th) day. If there is an opening at the extraction site, begin using the syringe that was included in the post-op bag. Fill the syringe with warm water, salt water or chlorhexidine as instructed by your surgeon. Irrigate the extraction site after mealtime and at the end of the day.
- For two weeks after surgery, refrain from using battery-powered toothbrushes and flossers such as a Waterpik or Sonicare.

## Call Your Surgeon if:

- A fever of 101° or more persists
- Any adverse reactions occur, including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, hives, itching, headaches or rashes.
- Significant jaw or ear pain that continues and is not relieved by medications. This pain may be caused by a dry socket which generally occurs between days three and five.
- Swelling and pain that remains two weeks after surgery.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING PAIN MEDICATION

**Per Federal regulations, narcotic pain medications require a patient evaluation, a review of records, and cannot be filled via telephone as electronic prescription is required. Refills are no longer allowed. Narcotic pain medications include, but are not limited to, Norco, Hycet, Tylenol #3. Evaluations and prescriptions will only be completed during normal business hours. There will be no exceptions.**

### IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING SMOKING AND VAPING

**Do not smoke or vape for two weeks following surgery. Smoking interferes with blood clotting and proper healing, and it causes an increased chance of infection and dry sockets.**



**NORTHWEST**  
ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

Please contact us immediately with questions or concerns about post-op recovery.

**OFFICE NUMBER**

**FOR AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCIES**

**713-428-6159**