



Post Operative Instructions

- 1. Prescription Medication:** Nothing prescribed _____ was sent to your pharmacy of record.
- 2. Pain:** Discomfort is normal after surgery. Unless you are allergic or have asthma, ulcers, bleeding problems, are pregnant, had gastric surgery, or take a blood thinner, follow the following pain management routine: **Start Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) at _____ am/pm. Take _____ mg every _____ hours.** Continue Ibuprofen as above for _____ days or as needed until you feel better. Your surgeon may prescribe a narcotic to take in addition to the Ibuprofen. Begin the narcotic if you have pain that does not improve by taking the Ibuprofen. These medications can be taken together. Take your pain medication with food to reduce the chances of nausea and vomiting. Narcotics impair your judgement and reflexes; do not drive while taking narcotic medications.
- 3. Bleeding & Bruising:** To help control bleeding, **place the supplied gauze pads directly over the extraction sites and bite firmly to hold them in place. Replace the gauze every 30 mins.** Proper placement over the surgical site will effectively absorb bleeding and prevent you from swallowing blood. When the gauze pads have little to no blood on them, you can stop using the gauze. Bleeding will vary with each person, but usually slows within 4 hours. A small amount of bleeding is normal for 24 hours. Do not use gauze pads while sleeping. Bruising is not common but can occur after oral surgery. Patients who are elderly, on blood thinners, or those with extensive surgery are more likely to bruise.
- 3. Stitches:** Unless told otherwise, your stitches will fall out on their own. If a tissue sealant was used, it will also fall off on its own. This will occur between 3 and 14 days and is expected.
- 4. Oral Hygiene:** Do not rinse, spit or brush your teeth the day of surgery. This may prolong your bleeding. **The day after surgery, brush your teeth and begin saltwater rinses.** It is important to brush all your teeth, at least twice daily, even if the teeth and gums are sore. Bacterial plaque and food bits will delay healing. To make the saltwater rinse, dissolve ½ teaspoon in 1 cup of warm water and rinse after every meal.
- 5. Swelling:** Swelling is normal after surgery and is the major cause of post-operative discomfort. Swelling increases until day 3 and then starts to decrease on day 4 and beyond. **Apply an ice pack to the cheek and jaw on the day of surgery.** Place the pack on the face in 10-minute intervals (10 mins on, 10 mins off) for the 1st 24 hours after surgery being careful not to hurt your skin. You should also elevate your head on 2 pillows.
- 6. Diet: Do not eat anything for 2 hours after surgery to allow for proper blood clot formation.** Cool hot foods and liquids for the first 24 hours. If you were sedated, slowly introduce foods starting with simple liquids and ramp up as you tolerate it. Eat only soft foods for the first week (soups, eggs, mashed potatoes, meatloaf). **Do not use a straw—this will cause more bleeding and slow healing.**
- 7. Smoking: Do not smoke or vape any substances.** Smoking increases bleeding and slows healing. Smokers are at a greater risk for dry socket, infection, and poor outcomes.
- 8. Activity:** Unless told otherwise, avoid vigorous physical activity for _____ days. Physical activity increases your blood pressure which can cause an increase in swelling, pain, and bleeding.
- 9. Emergencies:** If you have bleeding that soaks the gauze pads after 24 hours, severe pain that doesn't improve with ibuprofen and narcotics, increasing swelling after day 3, or another serious surgical concern, please call our answering service (707) 545-4625 to speak with the surgeon on call for emergencies. For other questions, please call the office Monday-Friday, 9am-4:30pm.