

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: GENERAL EXTRACTIONS

- 1. Do not** smoke, vape, or use chewing tobacco for 1 week following your surgery. Smoking increases pain, the risk of dry socket, infection, and prolongs healing.
- 2. Pain:** Most patients are given a prescription for pain medication following surgical procedures. The prescriptions will be sent directly to your pharmacy. Have the prescription filled immediately and use as directed. Our practice seeks to minimize opioid use in patients. NSAID pain medications are used in appropriate patients to minimize opiate use. A certain amount of pain following surgery is to be expected. If you have not been given a prescription, take over-the-counter pain medication such as Motrin® or Tylenol® which can be purchased from a drug store as instructed by the manufacturer. Applying ice packs will also help to relieve discomfort.
- 3. Bleeding:** Bite on a gauze sponge for 30 minutes, do NOT spit. Spitting can alter the clotting process and can cause prolonged bleeding. A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Continue changing gauze every 30-45 minutes, until bleeding subsides (site may ooze for a few days). Moist tea bags may also help to slow bleeding. Unless bleeding is excessive, swallow the saliva that accumulates in your mouth.
- 4. Eating:** Cool foods may be eaten immediately following surgery. Light soft food and plenty of liquids are advisable. Do not eat hot foods until the numbness has worn off. Do not eat foods that are difficult to chew or that are particularly spicy. Do not use straws.
- 5. Swelling:** The area operated upon will usually swell and may become quite large. Swelling usually peaks on the second to third day following surgery. To aid in the reduction of this swelling, apply an ice pack to the face over the operated area and keep head elevated. Apply the ice 30 minutes out of each hour during waking hours for the first 48 hours. Elevate the head with two pillows while sleeping, this will help to reduce swelling. On the third post-operative day warm packs are recommended. These measures will not eliminate swelling, but they will help to reduce its severity.
- 6. Mouth Rinse:** Do not brush or rinse the mouth the day of surgery. This may stimulate bleeding. Rinsing may begin the day after surgery and should be done gently. Use a warm salt water solution (1/2 teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water) 4 to 5 times a day for several days. Treat the surgical area gently, but keep it clean. Keeping your entire mouth clean lessens the chance of post-operative infection.
- 7. Sutures:** Most of the sutures that we use will dissolve on their own in 3-5 days. We place two sutures at each surgical site, so if one suture dissolves, the surgical site will usually heal without incident. Return to our office for suture removal and follow-up care as instructed on the date given.

POSSIBLE OCCURRENCES FOLLOWING SURGERY

Pain: Mild to moderate discomfort following surgery is to be expected. The pain is usually worst on the second to third day following surgery, but can persist for up to 1 week. If your pain persists after 1 week, please call our office for a post-operative evaluation.

Bleeding: Bleeding is a normal occurrence after any surgery. Biting down on gauze and applying pressure to the site where the tooth was removed is the best treatment. Please apply pressure for 30 minutes and then change the gauze as needed until the bleeding stops. If heavy bleeding persists, contact our office.

Swelling/Bruising Of the Face: Swelling and bruising occurs after most surgical procedures. It is usually more pronounced when more complicated procedures have been performed (e.g., removal of impacted teeth or multiple teeth).

Infection: Infections are uncommon in healthy patients, but occasionally occur. You can minimize the likelihood of infection by taking all antibiotics prescribed, avoiding smoking, brushing your teeth, and performing salt water rinses as directed. Signs of infection include: fever, worsening pain 3 days after surgery or later, swelling, bad taste, and bad smell in the mouth. If these symptoms occur please call our office.



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: GENERAL EXTRACTIONS (CONT.)

Vein Pain/Discoloration: Occasionally the vein used to administer intravenous drugs becomes irritated or swollen. The affected vein may become hard and discolored and be tender for several weeks or months. Consult this office if you have a vein problem after anesthesia.

Numbness (Paresthesia): Often operations are performed very close to the nerves. The post-operative swelling may cause numbness or tingling of the chin or lips. This condition is most often temporary and usually corrects itself. It may remain anywhere from a few days to several months.

Sore Throat: After third molar surgery a sore throat can occur, but will usually improve in a day or two by gargling with salt water.

Fever: A slight fever for 24–48 hours after surgery is common. If it persists or is over 101 degrees, consult our office.

Bone Fragments: Small, sharp pieces of bone occasionally form in the surgical areas, loosen and work through the gum. These fragments, which are not roots, usually work out of their own accord. However, if you need our assistance please call our office and make an appointment to have them removed.

Stiffness (Trismus): The inability to move the jaw easily after surgery is a common occurrence. It usually is a result of swelling. Exercise and chewing gum are aids to limbering up the muscles involved. If stiffness is severe and associated with a fever, consult our office.

Nausea: Nausea and vomiting are common side effects following anesthesia. Drink small sips of clear liquids like Sprite® or ginger ale every 30 minutes if this problem occurs. Eating food before taking your pain medication may help to prevent nausea.

Sinus Precautions: If you have been told that you have a sinus exposure, the following precautions should be taken:

1. DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE. If you need to, use a decongestant or a nasal spray.
2. Do not drink through a straw for 1 week.
3. No smoking.
4. No spitting.
5. Take any prescribed antibiotics as directed.

Call our office if you experience the following:

- Reoccurrence of swelling
- Prolonged difficulty opening your mouth
- Unpleasant odor or taste
- Persistent nausea/vomiting
- Excessive bleeping

NOTE TO PATIENT'S ESCORT:

If the patient has received out-patient general anesthesia, it is most important that you, the escort, watch the patient carefully for 6 hours afterwards. He or she should not be allowed to drive or even to walk around unescorted. The anesthesia can result in slow reactions for twelve hours or sometimes even longer.

No prescription will be refilled after office hours. If you feel that you are going to run out of medication, please call between the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM for refills.