



Post-Operative Instructions: Socket Preservation

Care of your mouth after 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. Please note that there is no charge for your post-operative care in this office.

Bleeding

Remove the gauze pack(s) after 1 hour. **Do not rinse, spit, use straws, smoke, or brush your teeth for the first 24 hours.** Spitting or sucking causes bleeding to continue. Slight bleeding is expected for the first day. If bleeding is excessive, place a folded gauze pad or a moistened tea bag over the wound and bite firmly for 30 minutes with constant pressure. Assume a semi-upright position using a couple of pillows.

Pain and Infection

Take your medications as directed on the package. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medications and contact our office. Do not drive or operate mechanical equipment after taking prescription pain medication.

Swelling

Apply an ice pack to the jaw, 20 minutes on then 20 minutes off, immediately upon returning home and change it frequently. Continue this on and off for 24–48 hours. Peak swelling should occur between the second and third day postoperatively and diminish slowly thereafter.

Diet

A liquid to no-chew diet is recommended the day of surgery, and then soft foods high in vitamins and protein is recommended for the next several days. Increase your fluid intake. As you progress to more solid foods, **you should not be chewing over the surgical site. Avoid food that is very hard or sharp.**

Nausea

Do not take narcotic prescription pain medication on an empty stomach! Small sips of a carbonated drink will usually terminate nausea. Follow this with mild tea or clear soup and then easily digestible foods such as toast, applesauce, or Jell-O®. Avoid greasy foods and milk products. Over-the-counter Dramamine® can be taken to reduce the nausea. If nausea continues, contact our office.

Oral Hygiene

Do not use your toothbrush over the surgical site. The day following surgery, you may brush the other teeth but not the site of surgery. Instead, use the prescription mouth rinse for 30+ seconds twice a day. **Do not use a Waterpik®-type device.**

Smoking

Smoking can cause bleeding and delay healing. Smokers are advised not to smoke for 3 days following surgery.

Rest

Avoid overexertion and get adequate rest. Avoiding sports, exercise, and strenuous activity for at least 2–3 days is generally recommended.

Dental Care

It is usually best to avoid routine or elective dental care (including orthodontic or hygiene visits) for approximately 2 weeks after surgery unless your doctor has advised otherwise.

Infection

Signs of infection include increased pain and swelling after 3 days, redness, warmth, drainage of pus, foul smell, and fever. If these occur, contact our office.

Post-Op Visits

You should be returning to the office in approximately 2 weeks for a check-up and to have sutures removed. If you are experiencing problems or have questions, we can usually arrange a post-operative visit on short notice. Please note that there are no additional charges for post-operative care visits.

If emergency care is necessary after normal office hours, please call the office number to reach our answering service: **(520) 745-2454.**