

Care of Mouth Following Extraction(s) and Oral Surgery

Bleeding – If used, sutures are usually dissolvable and will fall out on their own within 5-10 days. Some bleeding and oozing may be expected during the first 24 hours. Keep firm biting pressure on the gauze over the surgery site for at least 30 minutes. Remove the gauze and check the site for bleeding. If significant bleeding continues, new gauze should be placed and firm pressure applied for an additional 30 minutes. Repeat as necessary. A tea bag can be used if you do not have gauze. Avoid vigorous chewing, spitting, rinsing or sucking through a straw for 24 hours. Avoid continually pulling at your lip to check the operative site. Allowing the tissues to rest undisturbed assists the healing process. You may wish to place a towel on your pillowcase to avoid staining from any blood-tainted saliva.

Swelling – Swelling may be at a maximum about 2 or 3 days after surgery. Keeping your head elevated (in a recliner or on several pillows) will reduce swelling. Rest in a sitting position and sleep with two pillows for the first day and night. Place an ice pack to the face over the operated area for 20 minutes or every half hour, while awake, for the first day (this is the best way to reduce swelling).

Facial Bruising – Your face may become blue or yellow several days following oral surgery. This is normal bruising and will disappear in 7-10 days.

Muscle Stiffness – This is normal after oral surgery and can be helped by exercising the jaw: open your mouth to two fingers width at least 3-4 times a day.

Numbness – You may notice persistent numbness following surgery. Newer anesthetics can keep you numb and pain free for several hours. If the numbness persists for more than 24 hours please notify us.

Oral Hygiene – Do not rinse the mouth or spit on the day of surgery. Spitting will cause more bleeding. The day following surgery, it is recommended that you begin gently rinsing or soaking the mouth with warm water (avoid vigorous swishing). This should be done after meals and at bedtime. You can begin brushing the unaffected teeth the day after surgery. Oral cleanliness is essential to proper healing.

Diet – The day of your surgery, start with nourishing liquids and soft/colder foods. Avoid hot foods for 24 hours. Avoid foods with sharp edges (chips, pretzels, etc.) and do not chew immediately over the surgery area. You may limit yourself to a liquid or soft diet for a few days but you must drink plenty of fluids. Avoid carbonated and alcoholic beverages for 24 hours and do not use a straw for one week as this will disrupt the clot. You must take at least two glasses of liquid with pain medication. Gradually return to your normal diet as tolerated.

Pain – Initially, you may have some discomfort. The pain will gradually diminish. If medications were prescribed, take as directed with two full glasses of liquid. Do not take pain medication on an empty stomach.

Physical Activity – Avoid strenuous physical activity for 24-48 hours following surgery, until all the blood clots are well formed. Strenuous activity will increase your blood pressure and disrupt clot formation.

Smoking – It is advisable that you refrain from smoking for at least 3 days after surgery, as this increases the risk of infection and may delay healing. 7-14 days is recommended for optimal healing.

Follow-up Visit – Return to the office as requested for suture removal and/or examination. Contact our office if you have any questions or problems before that time. Please inform us if you cannot keep your appointment so that we can reschedule at your earliest convenience.

**Please call Dr. Barker directly if you have any concerns after office hours:
443-914-2210 Leave name, phone number and a brief message**

The following instructions explain the use of medications prescribed for you after surgery:

The duration of the local anesthesia given to you before you left will vary in different people but will probably last several hours. You should have enough time to obtain your prescription medications to alleviate post-operation discomfort.

Even though you will be pain free while the local anesthesia in your mouth starts to disappear, take the medicine as soon as you obtain it from the pharmacy. The following paragraphs detail the various medication(s) you may have been prescribed.

- **Percocet, Vicodin, Lortab and Tylenol #3** – These are very powerful narcotic pain relief medications. They may be used every 3-5 hours as needed for pain. It may be repeated after 60-90 minutes for the first dose only if adequate pain relief is not achieved. Take it with 2 full glasses of water or other liquid. You should never take pain medication on an empty stomach or vomiting can occur.
- **Motrin, Advil and Ibuprofen** – This is a very strong non-narcotic ant-inflammatory pain medication. The strength prescribed for you is 3-4 times more powerful than you can buy without a prescription. Take this medication with at least 2 full glasses of water or other liquid. You should not take this medication on an empty stomach.

NOTE: Percocet or Vicodin or Loratab or Tylenol #3 and Motrin or Advil or Ibuprofen may be taken together in the first day after surgery as they work in different areas of the body and enhance each other.

- **Antibiotics (Penicillin, Erythromycin, Keflex, Etc.)** – These may interfere with birth control pills. If you are using this method of contraception you must use alternative means of birth control. You should discuss this with your physician.

FOLLOW THE INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION ON EACH PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION BOTTLE

Additional Notes:

- If you had a lower wisdom tooth removed, a special medicine may have been packed in the area to insure healing and prevent dry socket. It will appear spongy and yellow: *do not disturb it.*
- Please remember all pain medication may cause nausea and vomiting. This is not a true allergic reaction. Do not take pain medication on an empty stomach. You may take pain medication with at least 2 full glasses of water or other liquid.
- If any unusual reactions occur while taking the prescribed medications, please call our office or your pharmacists to discuss the reactions you are having.
- Some people experience drowsiness or other signs of mental depression when using pain relieving medication. If this occurs, you must adjust your activity to compensate. Avoid driving, sit up slowly after lying down and avoid dangerous machinery.