



Dr. Ryan Patel
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Post-Operative Instructions

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 symptoms are expected, but may be minimized by following the instructions below. Please read them carefully.

In case of emergency call 911.

For any urgent questions outside of business hours, please call 202.800.4630

Bleeding

Remove the gauze pack(s) after one hour. **Do not smoke, spit, or drink through a straw for the first 72 hours.** Spitting or sucking through a straw will cause bleeding to continue, due to the negative pressure it creates in the mouth. 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 — 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off — to the jaw 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 or non-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. Gradually resume your normal diet as soon as possible.

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 like toast 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

The day following surgery, the mouth may be rinsed gently with a warm saltwater solution (1/2 teaspoon salt per half glass of lukewarm water) after each meal and at bedtime. Do not use hydrogen peroxide rinses. The teeth should be brushed, but avoid the site(s) of surgery.

Smoking

Smoking will 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 any of the following, more than 3 days after the procedure: increased pain and swelling, redness, warmth, drainage of pus, foul smell, and fever. If these occur, contact us.

Post-Op Visits

If you have been given an appointment for post-operative care, please return to the office as scheduled. If you are experiencing problems or have questions, we can usually arrange a post-operative visit on short notice.

If emergency care is necessary after normal office hours, please call the office number (202.800.4630), who will connect you to the surgeon, or call 911 for life threatening emergencies.