

The Institute of Jaw and Facial Surgery, Inc.

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POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ BOTH SIDES OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY. Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt follow these guidelines or call our office any time for clarification.

DAY OF SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

FIRST HOUR: Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them for the first hour unless the bleeding is not being controlled. If active bleeding persists after one hour, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30-60 minutes. The gauze may be changed as necessary and may be dampened and/or fluffed for more comfortable positioning.

EXERCISE CARE: Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do **NOT** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects or your fingers. You may brush teeth gently. **DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 1 week, since it is very detrimental to healing. Do **NOT** drink through a straw.

OOZING: Intermittent bleeding or oozing is normal. It may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the surgical area and biting down firmly for 30-60 minutes. Please wash your hands prior to changing the gauze. You may need to repeat this several times before the bleeding will stop.

STEADY BLEEDING: Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between your teeth rather than exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning fresh packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may **substitute a tea bag** (soaked in hot water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) for 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office. Do not spit while you are bleeding.

SWELLING: Often there is some swelling associated with oral surgery. You can minimize this by using a cold pack or ice bag wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to face or cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the first 12 to 24 hours after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed. It is relatively normal for the swelling and pain to increase up to the 3rd and 4th day post operatively. This should start to subside on the 5th to 7th day. Keep your head elevated for 24 hours.

NUMBING: Numbness may last up to 2-3 hours. Do not be alarmed if it takes longer for numbing to wear off.

PAIN: Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medications, and if you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you will be able to manage any discomfort better. Effects of pain medicine vary widely among individuals. **If you do not achieve adequate relief**, you may supplement each pill with an analgesic such as aspirin, Motrin, Advil, or Tylenol. Some people may even require two of the pain pills at one time during the early stages (but that may add to the risk of upset stomach). Remember that the most severe discomfort is usually within the first six hours after the anesthetic wears off; after that your need for medicine should lessen.

NAUSEA: Nausea is not an uncommon event after surgery, and it is sometimes caused by stronger pain medicines. Preceding each pill with a small amount of soft food, then taking the pill with a large volume of water may reduce nausea. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize the pain medication, but call us if you do not feel better or if repeated vomiting is a problem. Cola drinks that have less carbonation may help with nausea. If your doctor prescribed you a nausea medication you can use it during this time.

Your Post Operative Appointment Is Scheduled On: DAY _____ DATE _____ TIME _____

DIET: Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Temperature of the food doesn't matter, but avoid extremely hot foods. It is sometimes advisable, but not required to confine the first day's intake to bland liquids or pureed foods (creamed soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.). Avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., that may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you can progress to solid foods at your own pace. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits as much as possible and follow instructions from your physician or our doctors regarding your insulin schedule. Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking narcotic pain medication.

SHARP EDGES: If you feel sharp edges in the surgical areas with your tongue it is probably the bony walls, which originally supported the teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the first week or two after surgery. They are not pieces of tooth and, if necessary, we will remove them. Please call the office if you are concerned.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

MOUTH RINSES: Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use ¼ teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8-ounce glass of water and gently rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat as often as you like, but at least two or three times daily for the next five days. Avoid over the counter mouth rinses during the post operative period. Periogard should be used the day after your surgery and should be used for a week post operatively.

BRUSHING: Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing of all areas, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

SYRINGE: If the doctor deems it necessary, you will be given a syringe at your post operative appointment. Fill it with warm water and irrigate any open sockets gently, especially after eating.

POSTOPERATIVE HEALING: Healing of surgical procedures varies with the health and age of patients. The maximum swelling will occur anywhere from the third to the sixth day postoperatively. As the swelling increases, stiffness and discomfort may likewise increase. Acute pain is handled by narcotic analgesics. The stiffness associated with maximum swelling is best handled with anti-inflammatory medications (i.e. Aleve, aspirin, Motrin, or Advil). Gradual steady improvement over the first week can generally be expected. A dry socket in an extraction site occurs when the blood clot from the extraction is lost and the socket is exposed to the acids of the mouth. If a dry socket occurs, it is generally not until the fourth to seventh day postoperatively. The pain that occurs from a dry socket is best handled by either increasing narcotic analgesics or taking an anti-inflammatory with the narcotic analgesic. **Dry sockets are treated with the placement of anesthetic packs into the socket during normal business hours only.**

HOT APPLICATIONS: To help decrease stiffness in your jaw you may apply warm compresses to the skin overlying the areas for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off, however, this may increase swelling.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office where you had your surgery.

PHONE NUMBERS: 330-493-1605 CANTON and 330-867-8347 AKRON

WE CANNOT CALL IN PAIN MEDICATION PRESCRIPTIONS. PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS WILL ONLY BE HANDLED FROM 8:30 am TO 4:00 pm. MONDAY –THURSDAY & FRIDAY BEFORE 2 PM. THIS WILL BE DONE TO AVOID MEDICATION INTERACTIONS. PLEASE ANTICIPATE THIS. PLEASE HAVE A PHARMACY PHONE NUMBER READY.

FOR AFTER HOUR CALLS: YOU MUST PROVIDE THE NAME OF YOUR SURGEON, DATE OF SURGERY, AND LOCATION OF SURGERY OR THE DOCTOR WILL NOT BE PAGED.