

Instructions Following Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Please read these instructions carefully. They will help you understand what can be expected following surgery. The information will also assist you in identifying abnormal conditions which might develop and for which you should contact this office.

Recovery from general anesthesia or intravenous (IV) sedation

Go directly home after surgery. Plan to rest the remainder of the day and evening. You should not be left alone for the remainder of the day after arrival at home. Anesthetic medications, prescription pain pills and the lack of water and food before surgery can cause dizziness. Therefore, you should be assisted when getting up and walking today. Please do not drive, operate machinery or make any significant personal or business decisions for at least 24 hours after surgery.

Wound Care/Bleeding

Bite firmly on gauze packs that have been placed for one hour. Then, gently remove the gauze. Replace if necessary. If bleeding begins again, place a damp folded gauze pack over the tooth socket and bite **firmly** for 30 minutes. If bleeding persists, place a moistened tea bag over the bleeding area and bite firmly for one hour. If there is no improvement, please call the office. *It is normal for some blood to ooze from the area of surgery.* Intermittent bleeding, small blood clots, flecks of blood in the saliva or pink saliva may occur for several days after surgery. Keep your head elevated with several pillows or sit in a lounge chair throughout the first night. You may find a bloodstain on your pillow in the morning. **DO NOT SLEEP WITH GAUZE IN YOUR MOUTH.** Do not spit or suck through a straw on the first day since this promotes bleeding. Do not smoke for at least 48 hours after surgery because smoking will promote bleeding and interfere with healing.

Discomfort

Use the pain medications only as prescribed. Take your pain medications before the local anesthetic wears off. Consume a small amount of food before taking the pain pills because an upset stomach or nausea may result from taking these medications on an empty stomach. Some discomfort is normal after surgery. Pain can be controlled but not eliminated by taking the prescribed medication on schedule for at least the first two days after surgery. If your pain cannot be controlled, please call the office. You should be able to reduce or discontinue the prescription pain medication after several days. Mild discomfort may be relieved by over-the-counter medications like acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) or Aleve (naproxen sodium). **Caution:** *Do not drive or operate machinery within 24 hours of taking prescription pain medication. Do not drink alcohol while taking any pain medication.*

Medications

Take the medications as instructed. If an antibiotic was prescribed, take it until the prescription is finished. **Note:** *Antibiotics may interfere with the action of birth control pills. Additional contraception is advised during the entire month's cycle.*

Oral hygiene

Do not rinse your mouth, spit, or brush your teeth until 24 hours after surgery. After that time, rinse your mouth gently with warm salt water (1/2 tsp. of salt in 8 oz. of warm water) at least 4 times a day. Brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery. Avoid mouthwash containing alcohol, *except for chlorhexidine prescription rinse, if it was prescribed*, since it may be irritating.

Diet

Begin to drink plenty of liquids as soon as possible after surgery. A liquid or soft, non-chewy diet is advisable for the first day or two. Avoid using a straw during the first day. You may supplement your diet with high protein and calorie beverages like Carnation Instant Breakfast, Ensure or Boost. The supplements can be purchased without a prescription at pharmacies or grocery stores. You may gradually resume your normal diet as soon as you are able.

Activity

Limit activity for several days after surgery, especially if taking prescription pain medication. Extreme activity while taking prescription pain medication may cause nausea. Get plenty of rest. After that time, gradually resume your normal activity level, but avoid strenuous activity for several days.

Driving or operating machinery

Do not drive or operate machinery or make any major personal or financial decisions for at least 24 hours after receiving general anesthesia or intravenous sedation or taking narcotic pain medication.

Swelling

Swelling after surgery is normal and may be significant. *It reaches its peak about 48 hours after surgery and will slowly decrease over the following week.* Applying ice packs intermittently (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off) over the area of surgery for the first 12 hours will help control the swelling. However, if you were given a compression bandage with ice packs, it should be used continuously for the first day. Ice will be of little benefit after the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, you may apply heat following the same “on-off” schedule.

Bruising

You may experience mild bruising in the area of surgery. This is a normal response and should not be a cause for alarm. It will gradually disappear in 7 to 14 days.

Jaw stiffness

Jaw muscle stiffness and limited opening of your mouth may occur after surgery. This is normal, and it should gradually improve in the following week. Resuming a normal, chewy diet and gentle jaw exercises (opening and closing and moving the jaw from side to side) will help relieve this situation.

Sutures (stitches)

Depending on the type used, sutures may need to be removed at your post-operative visit.

Special instructions:

Please call the office at (847) 367-8656 if:

- There is excessive discomfort that cannot be controlled with the prescription medication.
- You have bleeding that cannot be controlled by the measures in this instruction sheet.
- There is persistent nausea or vomiting, and you cannot keep down fluids or food.
- Swelling increases after the third day after surgery.
- A fever develops which is greater than 101°F.
- You have an unexpected reaction to prescribed medications.
- You have **any** questions.

If you have an urgent issue after hours, the doctors can be reached by calling the office and following the prompts to contact them or call them directly at (847) 917-8656. Please do not send text messages.

Follow-up Appointment: _____ / / _____ **a.m./p.m.**
Day Date Time