



Cornerstone Dental Group

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Oral Surgery: Post-Operative Instructions

Bleeding

Normal oozing may occur for up to 24 hours following surgery and is controlled by firm biting pressure on several gauze pads placed over the tooth socket. Maintain pressure on the socket for 30 minutes after surgery and then replace gauze pads if necessary for further 30-minute intervals as needed. Smoking, vaping, drinking with a straw, spitting and physical activity may cause bleeding; avoid these for at least 24 hours after surgery. Oozing is normal for up to 24 hours. If bleeding becomes brisk and fills your mouth quickly, contact the dentist who did your surgery at the number below.

Swelling

Swelling and sometimes bruising are common after surgery. It typically reaches a maximum 48-72 hours after surgery and usually lasts 4-6 days. To keep this to a minimum, apply ice packs 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off for the first 12 hours after your surgery. Keeping your head elevated also helps. The swelling should dissipate within 7-10 days; applying warm compresses, starting the second day should expedite its resolution.

Pain

Some discomfort is normal after surgery; this tends to be the worst in the first 6 to 8 hours following surgery. It can be controlled but not eliminated by taking the pain medication prescribed. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach. Follow the instructions given for any pain medication. If itching or a rash develops, stop taking all medications and contact your dentist. If the pain worsens after the fourth day, call your dentist at the number below.

Pain Medication

Often, over-the-counter pain medication is sufficient for pain control. Dosing medication regularly prevents it from dipping below its peak efficacy. Recommended dosing is (unless contraindicated to use specific medications for medical reasons):

1. Ibuprofen 600mg every 6 hours (do not exceed 3200mg daily)

+

2a. Tylenol® 500mg every 6 hours (do not exceed 3000mg daily)

OR

2b. Prescribed pain medication if given (which already has Tylenol® in it- so no need to take additional Tylenol®).

If pain is controlled with Ibuprofen alone, you do not need to take Tylenol®- this is only if Ibuprofen alone is not sufficient. Usually, prescribed pain medication is only required (if at all) in the first few days following surgery.

Often, alternating between Ibuprofen and Tylenol® or prescribed medication (taking something every 3 hours) effectively controls pain. For example, take 600mg Ibuprofen immediately following surgery and 3 hours later take 500mg Tylenol® or prescribed medication, then 3 hours later take 600mg Ibuprofen etc.

Muscle Soreness

Difficulty opening the jaw and muscle stiffness are common after some extractions, particularly wisdom teeth. This is normal and will improve in 5-10 days. If you have a history of jaw pain, symptoms can take longer to resolve and may require adjunctive treatment (massage, physio, etc.) to improve. Moist heat after 48 hours can help muscle soreness.

Mouth Care

Brush and floss as usual, avoiding the surgical site for the rest of the day. Beginning the following day, rinse gently with salt water (one teaspoon of salt mixed with warm water) for 30-second intervals at least five times a day or the mouth rinse provided by your dentist; continue for a week. Two days following surgery, brush the area: run your toothbrush under hot water to soften the bristles and without toothpaste, lightly cleanse the area. Smoking is not advised postoperatively for a minimum of one week. Nicotine in any form interferes with the healing process and increases the incidence of infection, dry socket and other complications.

Diet

It is important to maintain a good nutritional diet after surgery. Eat a lukewarm, soft diet the day of surgery up to a week following (dependent on the extent of surgery). Avoid hard, small foods (nuts/seeds/popcorn kernels, etc.) that could end up in the socket and potentially cause infection. Drink as much fluid as you can for three days.

Infection

If swelling increases after the fourth day, along with a fever or a foul taste, contact us.

Dry Socket

A dry socket is when part of the blood clot either dissolves or falls out of the surgical site. This is not a serious complication but is often a painful one. A symptom of a dry socket is pain that increases several days after the extraction. If this is the case, please contact us, as some medication may need to be placed into the site to improve comfort as the healing progresses. Smoking, vaping, spitting, drinking through a straw, and vigorous exercise too soon after your surgery increase the risk of dry socket.

Soft Food Suggestions/Ideas

After your surgery, smoothies (eaten with a spoon), yogurt, puddings, ice cream, eggs, oatmeal, mashed potatoes, soft pasta, soup, and soft, well-cooked foods should be considered.

If, for any reason, you are concerned about your condition, please notify us!!!

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