

Post-Operative Instructions Following Oral Surgery

Pain & Discomfort

- For mild discomfort use a non-aspirin pain killer such as Ibuprofen (Advil) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol). Avoid aspirin as it may increase bleeding.
- For moderate pain you may need a prescription medication or higher dose Advil.
- Please note that you may have been instructed to take Advil for the first 24-48 hours following surgery as an anti-inflammatory. This will help with mild to moderate pain but its main purpose is to reduce the inflammation at the healing site. Please make sure you take this medication as directed even if you are not having pain.
- Severe pain after surgery is unusual so please contact the office or dentist if you experience it. Do not exceed 2400mg of Advil per day or 4000 mg of Tylenol per day.

Swelling

- Some swelling is expected and will reach a maximum within 3 days.
- Use an ice pack over the affected cheek intermittently with 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off as much as you can for the first 2 days.
- Sleeping with your head elevated for the first 2 nights will also help to reduce pooling of blood in the healing site.
- After the second day, you may transition from ice packs to warm packs applied over the site, as well as warm salt water “holds” in your mouth.

Bleeding

- Some oozing is normal for the first day or two after surgery.
- Excessive bleeding will usually be controlled by applying a moist gauze to the site and holding it down with pressure. Change the gauze every 30 minutes as needed until bleeding subsides.
- Keep head elevated and avoid strenuous activity.
- Do not touch or brush the healing site for the first 48 hours.
- If bleeding persists, call our office or dentist.

Oral Hygiene

- Continue to clean the rest of your mouth as you normally would but avoid contacting the healing site in any way for the first week.
- If Chlorhexidine rinse (Peridex) has been prescribed, use it by rinsing gently for one minute morning and evening.

Nutrition

- Drink plenty of fluids, especially for the first 2 to 3 days after surgery.
- Avoid using drinking straws for the first few days.
- Avoid smoking and alcoholic beverages during the first week if possible as they will slow the healing process significantly and possibly result in the loss of grafts if they were done.

- Good nutrition is essential for healing. Following the procedure you will need to eat softer foods and drink plenty of fluids. Plan to have foods on hand with high protein content and soft consistency such as soups, fish dishes, eggs, oatmeal, and yogurt. Other options include fruit juices, milkshakes, pudding, ice cream, Jell-O and soft fruits. Liquid diet supplements such as Ensure and Boost are also quite helpful.
- Please don't plan to lose weight after your surgery as this may compromise your healing.

Miscellaneous

- Exercise - avoid strenuous activity for the first week following surgery, including workouts.
- Air Travel should be avoided for 4 or 5 days especially if you have had sinus grafting done. The pressure changes experienced may result in bleeding and discomfort.
- Do not drive or operate machinery for the remainder of the day if you have taken any oral sedatives or Tylenol #3.
- Bruising, difficulty swallowing and difficulty in opening and closing your jaw are conditions that may be experienced. These will normally resolve in time.
- General improvement in comfort should be seen after 3 days.

Please notify us if any of the following occurs:

- Heavy bleeding and the gauze sponges are still saturated with blood more than 3 hours after surgery.
- Severe nagging/gnawing pain from the surgical site after 24 hours.
- Elevation of body temperature above 38.3°C /101°F.
- Delayed swelling after 2 or 3 days accompanied by a foul taste in your mouth.

Additional Instructions for Sinus Graft Patients

- Do not blow your nose.
- Do not smoke or use smokeless tobacco.
- Do not drink with a straw.
- If you must sneeze, do so with mouth open to relieve pressure build up in the sinus.
- Take medications as directed – do not skip doses.
- You may be aware of small “granules” in your mouth for the next few days. This is normal. Notify the office if you feel granules in your nose.
- Notify the office if medications do not relieve your discomfort.