



Post-Operative Dental Surgery Instructions

1. Things to expect following surgery:

- a. **Bleeding:** Bleeding or oozing for the first 12-24 hours is common. Mild to moderate bruising/discoloration can also be present.
- b. **Swelling:** Swelling may begin within the first 24 hours but should reach its maximum by 48-72 hours. Swelling should diminish by the 5th day.
- c. **Discomfort:** Discomfort may begin as early as when the anesthetic wears off. Typically discomfort will increase as swelling increases, with peak levels occurring within the first 48 hours and gradually tapering thereafter.

2. Things to do following surgery:

- a. **Refrain from:** Smoking, vaping, vigorous swishing, and drinking through a straw for a minimum of the first 72 hours. Ideally to prevent infections and delays in the healing process, this should be avoided until the tissue completely heals up or your dentist advises you otherwise. Please also refrain from disturbing any stitches that were placed.
- b. **Bleeding:**
 - i. Bite on gauze for 30 min - 1 hour with constant, firm pressure over the surgical site. If bleeding continues, replace gauze and continue to apply pressure until bleeding stops. Some oozing and discoloration of saliva is normal, so place an old towel on your pillow before going to sleep the first night. Keep head elevated.
- c. **Swelling:**
 - i. Apply an ice pack to the outside of the face over the surgical area--20 minutes on, 20 minutes off. Repeat for the first 24 hours following surgery as needed.
 - ii. After first day use warm, moist heat on face for swelling.
- d. **Discomfort:**
 - i. Take medications as directed for pain. See provided Pain Management sheet.
- e. **Diet:**
 - i. Avoid crunchy, crumbly, hot, or spicy foods for at least the first 72 hours following surgery or as directed by your dentist. Soup (room temperature or cold), oatmeal, milkshakes (without seeds), and mashed potatoes are all examples of acceptable soft foods. Do not skip meals as adequate nutrition is important for the healing process.
 - ii. Diet can be supplemented with high protein or meal replacement shakes such as Ensure or Boost. Protein is an essential nutrient in the recovery process.
- f. **Physical Activity:**
 - i. Avoid heavy lifting, sports, or strenuous exercises for the first 5-7 days or as directed by your dentist. Walking is a great way to maintain physical activity while healing.
- g. **Hygiene:**
 - i. Do not brush teeth in area of surgery for the first 48 hours. Other areas of the mouth may be brushed paying special attention to avoid area of surgery.
 - ii. Use warm salt water rinses ($\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of salt to 1 cup of water) 3-5 times daily after meals for the first 2 days following surgery (very gentle swishing).
 - iii. If periodontal surgery was completed, including crown lengthening, do not brush the site for the first week. Use Peridex mouth rinse twice daily, swishing for 30 seconds and spitting.
- h. **Medication:**
 - i. Take all medications as instructed. If antibiotics were prescribed, be sure to take ALL as directed.

3. Contact the office at (512) 717-5315 or seek emergency care if:

- a. Bleeding is excessive, swelling continues to enlarge after 72 hours, difficulty swallowing or breathing, temperature rises over 100°F.