

ALL WEST DENTAL

380-3300

For Emergency Contact Only:

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EXTRACTION AND/OR SOFT TISSUE SURGERY/BIOPSY: POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1. Bleeding:

Apply constant firm biting pressure on moistened gauze over the surgical site for 30 minutes after the surgery, and then discard the gauze. This acts as a pressure dressing to help form a blood clot. You can expect moderate oozing of blood for the first few days that will stain your saliva or spot moistened gauze. This is normal. Should bleeding become excessive at any time during the first few days, apply constant firm biting pressure on a roll of moistened gauze or a moistened tea bag over the surgical site for 45 minutes. Repeat if necessary. If significant, excessive bleeding continues after this, contact the office.

2. Rest:

Strenuous activity can cause bleeding, so limit activities for the first 24 hours after surgery. Sit in a semi-upright position and use pillows for support. Place a towel over your pillow to prevent blood from staining.

3. Swelling and Bruising:

Swelling and bruising are normal after surgery, and will vary with the type of surgery. Apply ice to the cheek during the first 24 hours to reduce swelling. Use the ice packs 20 minutes on/20 minutes off, and then repeat. After the first 24 hours, ice will not affect swelling but may reduce pain. Swelling will reach a maximum about 48-72 hours after surgery. Bruising will resolve over a period of days.

4. Infection and Fever:

Most healthy patients have a low risk of developing infection after surgery. If the doctor felt you were at increased risk of infection because of your general health or the type of surgery, you will be placed on antibiotic medication. It is important that you follow directions on the label and take the medication until finished. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medication and contact the office immediately. It is a normal reaction to surgery to develop a slight elevation in temperature for 24-48 hours after surgery. If the fever persists or is highly elevated and you feel generally fatigued, please contact the office. You will be at the greatest risk of infection 3 days after surgery.

5. Surgical Site Pain:

Pain normally reaches a peak 48-72 hours after surgery. If the doctor anticipates you will have only minor pain, take over-the-counter Tylenol or Advil. Avoid aspirin because it interferes with blood clotting. Take any prescribed pain medication as directed. The pain medication may make you drowsy, so you should not drive a car or perform important tasks. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medication and contact the office immediately.

6. Muscle Pain:

It is common to have swelling in the muscles after surgery and this will resolve with time. Starting 3 days after surgery you can begin application of moist heat 4-6 times daily to the jaw muscles to help resolve muscle pain. Do not begin sooner than 3 days after surgery or you can risk developing an infection.

7. Nausea:

Nausea is usually due to swallowing a small amount of blood with the surgery. Some medications can also cause nausea. A small amount of carbonated drink every 1 hour will usually relieve this feeling. If nausea continues, contact the office.

8. Diet:

Soft foods and liquids high in vitamins and protein are recommended. Avoid nuts, popcorn, and crunchy or spicy foods that can irritate the surgical site.

9. Oral Hygiene:

After 24 hours you should begin to rinse your mouth *gently* with a solution of 1 teaspoon of salt in a warm glass of water 5 or 6 times daily. Continue this for the first week after surgery. You should brush your teeth after surgery, but avoid the surgical site for a few days.

10. Smoking:

Smoking can cause bleeding or dry socket, and can delay healing and increase the risk of infection. Smoking should be avoided or greatly reduced for 48 hours after surgery. Use a gauze pack over the surgical site if you must smoke.

11. Dry Socket (extraction only):

This is a significant sharp pain in the jaw and ear due to loss of the blood clot and can occur after any tooth extraction, although it is more common after removal of lower molar teeth. Avoid vigorous rinsing, spitting, smoking and drinking through a straw for the first few days because these will disturb the blood clot. If dry socket develops, contact the office.

12. Antibiotics (females only):

Because antibiotics will inactivate most birth control medication, use other methods of contraception until your next menstrual cycle.

13. Sutures:

You will be advised if sutures have been placed over the surgical site. If they are not the type that dissolves they will be removed at your follow-up visit.

14. Sedation:

If you were sedated for the surgery, it is important for someone to stay with you for 24 hours until you have recovered from the effects of the medications.