

Oral Surgery

Detailed Aftercare Instructions

Follow your treating dentist's specific directions first.

The First 24 Hours

- Keep the gauze in place, biting gently and firmly, for 30–60 minutes or as directed; replace with fresh gauze if bleeding continues.
- Do not rinse, spit forcefully, use a straw, or smoke/vape for the first 24 hours — this protects the blood clot that starts healing.
- Rest at home. Avoid bending over, heavy lifting, and exercise.
- Keep your head slightly raised when lying down; use an extra pillow.

Bleeding

- Some oozing and pink-tinged saliva the first day are normal.
- If bleeding continues, place a fresh folded gauze pad over the site and bite firmly for 30 minutes.
- Do not sleep with gauze in your mouth.
- Call us if bleeding stays heavy or does not slow after several tries.
- A moist black tea bag held firmly on the site for 30 minutes can help slow bleeding.

Swelling & Bruising

- Swelling is normal and usually peaks on day 2 or 3, then improves.
- Apply an ice pack to the cheek: 15–20 minutes on, 15–20 minutes off, during the first 24–36 hours.
- After 36 hours, switch to a warm compress on the cheek to ease stiffness.
- Mild bruising of the cheek or jaw is normal and fades within a week or two.
- Some jaw stiffness is normal; open and close gently as comfort allows.

Pain & Medication

- Take pain medication as directed — do not wait until pain is severe.
- Take medication with food to reduce nausea.
- Do not drive or operate machinery if medication makes you drowsy.
- Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication.
- If antibiotics were prescribed, finish the full course, even if you feel better.
- Use any prescribed mouth rinse exactly as directed.
- If you take other daily medications, ask your dentist or pharmacist whether to continue them.
- Tell us about any allergies, especially to pain medicines or antibiotics.

Eating & Drinking

- Start with cool liquids and soft foods: water, yogurt, applesauce, mashed potatoes, lukewarm soup (not hot).
- Chew on the opposite side of your mouth; do not chew on the treated site.
- Add firmer foods gradually as comfort allows.
- Avoid hot, spicy, acidic, crunchy, hard, or sticky foods for the first few days.
- Do not use a straw for at least 24–48 hours (or longer if your dentist advises).
- Drink plenty of water.
- Do not smoke or vape — it delays healing and raises the risk of dry socket and infection.

Oral Hygiene

- Do not brush, rinse, or touch the surgical area for the first 24 hours.
- After 24 hours, rinse gently with warm salt water ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water) after meals, or use a prescribed rinse as directed.
- Brush your other teeth gently; avoid the surgical area until your dentist tells you to clean it.
- Do not use mouthwash with alcohol or a water flosser near the site unless your dentist tells you to.
- Keep the area clean — food trapped in the socket can slow healing.

Dry Socket

- Dry socket happens when the blood clot is lost too soon. It causes deep, throbbing pain 3–5 days after surgery, sometimes with bad breath or a bad taste.
- To lower the risk: no straws, no smoking/vaping, and no forceful spitting or rinsing for the first days.
- If you develop worsening pain after the first few days, call us — dry socket is treatable.

Stitches

- Stitches may dissolve on their own in 1–2 weeks, or your dentist may remove them at your follow-up visit.
- Do not pull, pick at, or cut the stitches.
- A stitch that feels loose is often normal as the area heals.

What to Expect

- Mild soreness, swelling, and limited opening are normal for the first few days.
- The socket slowly fills in over the next weeks. A small dip in the gum may remain for a while.
- Mild oozing, a metallic taste, or a slight odor in the first day or two can be normal.

Follow-Up

- Keep your follow-up visit, even if you feel fine.

- Call us sooner if pain worsens after improving, swelling increases after day 3, or you develop fever.

Call us right away or seek emergency care if you have:

- Bleeding that will not stop.
- Trouble breathing or swallowing.
- Severe swelling, fever, or pain not relieved by medication.
- Signs of an allergic reaction: rash, itching, or swelling of the lips or tongue.
- Pus, a bad taste that keeps getting worse, or swelling that spreads to the face or neck.

For a life-threatening emergency, call 911.

Questions or Follow-Up

Office: 718-584-9777

TEXT MESSAGE ONLY: 516-855-8033

For follow-up after a recent procedure.

3201 Grand Concourse Apt 2K, Bronx, NY 10468

This sheet is general guidance and does not replace your dentist's instructions.