



POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Dr. Cosimi's Cell: 618-530-4546

1. MEDICATIONS: You will probably be given prescriptions at your appointment. Take them to your pharmacy to be filled as soon as possible after leaving our office. All medications should be taken strictly as prescribed. If antibiotics were prescribed, take them as directed **until all are gone**, as long as there are no adverse reactions. (itching, redness, etc.) Some medications may cause nausea. Rest and a light meal will alleviate this feeling.

2. BLEEDING: You may notice slight bleeding from the surgical site. This type of minor bleeding for one or two days is not unusual and is not a major concern. If a tooth was extracted, keep pressure on the extraction site with gauze for 45 minutes-1 hour. If bleeding continues after the gauze is removed, reapply and keep pressure for another hour. Unless bleeding is excessive, just swallow whatever accumulates in your mouth. Most of it is saliva and will not hurt you. It is normal to have minimal oozing for several hours after surgery. If at any time you notice the formation of large blood clots or an obvious flow of blood which is more than a slight ooze, apply a tea bag to the surgical area with firm but gentle pressure for 15 minutes; then repeat for a second time only. If excessive bleeding continues, please call the office. Do not spit or suck on the blood clot. **DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 72 hours after surgery. These activities may result in a dry socket, which requires additional care at the office.

3. SUTURES: Sutures ("stitches") are placed to hold the gingival tissues in the proper position for ideal healing. If sutures ("stitches") were placed, your doctor will usually want you to return so they can be fully removed once sufficient healing has occurred. **Do not disturb the sutures with your tongue, toothbrush or in any other manner since displacement will impair healing.** If you notice a suture has come out or come loose, notify your dentist.

4. CARE OF THE DRESSING: If a dressing has been placed over the surgical site, try to stay away from it the first few days. The dressing is primarily for comfort. If the dressing should become loose or fall off, and there is no increase in the level of discomfort, it is okay to leave it off. **The best thing you can do to take care of the surgery site is to leave it alone. Do not pull your lip out to look at the area.**

5. DIET: For your comfort and to protect the surgical area, a soft diet is recommended. Avoid chewing in the area of surgery. Avoid hard, fibrous, or "sharp" foods (such as corn chips), spicy, salty and excessively hot foods and liquids, as these may be uncomfortable. Do not eat popcorn or anything with small seeds for 7 days after surgery. **Drink plenty of liquids.** It is important to maintain a diet with a normal calorie level that is high in protein, minerals and vitamins to support post-operative healing. Eat as normally as possible. **POST-SURGERY IS NOT THE TIME TO START A DIET.** Avoid alcohol and carbonated beverages for 72 hours and **do not use a straw!**

6. ORAL HYGIENE: Continue to brush and floss the teeth which were not involved in the surgery (or covered by periodontal dressing). The surgical area should not be disturbed for the first week postoperatively. However, you may rinse gently with a mouthwash if prescribed by your doctor. Do not use a peroxide mouthwash. After your sutures have been removed, generally after 1 week, you should lightly clean the teeth using a soft toothbrush or as instructed by your doctor.

7. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: Avoid strenuous physical activity, heavy lifting, bending, and stooping during your immediate post-op period, usually 2 or 3 days.

SAMPLE LIST OF SOFT FOODS FOLLOWING SURGERY

Cottage Cheese	Jell-O	Macaroni and Cheese	Yogurt	Soups (luke warm)
Scrambled Eggs	Pudding	Mashed Potatoes and Gravy		Milkshake (no straw)

This is just a sample list. Other foods may be added as you desire. Do not use any-straws, and avoid spicy and crunchy foods. Feel free to call with any questions. Office: 618-997-2403

Possible Complications Following Intra-Oral Surgery
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Pain: This is the most common post-operative problem. Causes can be numerous and the level of discomfort can vary depending on the type of procedure involved. If pain medication was prescribed, it is best to take the first dose while the site is still numb. If your medication does not relieve your pain, or your pain persists, please call the office. Remember, you will have a dull aching feeling after surgery.

Swelling: Swelling may occur after all surgical procedures. It is usually more pronounced 48 hours after surgery. Ice packs can be used during the first 24 hours after surgery to reduce swelling. As healing progresses, swelling will decrease. If swelling becomes severe or makes swallowing difficult, call the office.

Discoloration of the face: Bruising or discoloration is caused by bleeding beneath the surface of the skin and occurs more readily in some patients than others. It usually corrects itself within a week or two after surgery.

Numbness (Paresthesia, Anesthesia): Operations are often performed very close to nerves. The post-operative swelling or surgery done can cause numbness, especially of the lip and chin. This condition is usually temporary. If it persists, call the office.

Sore throat: Rather common after third molar surgery. A sore throat usually will improve in a day or two by gargling with salt water. If it persists, or becomes severe or is accompanied by a fever, it could indicate infection. Consult the office.

Fever: A slight fever for 24-48 hours after surgery is common. If it persists or is over 101 degrees (taken orally) call the office.

Bone Spicules: Small, sharp pieces of bone often form in the surgical areas after a week or more. These fragments may work out by themselves. If not, you may need to see the doctor for further treatment.

Stiffness: Difficulty in opening and closing the jaw after inter-oral surgery is a common occurrence. Exercise, such as chewing gum is an aid to limbering up the muscles involved. If stiffness is very severe or is accompanied by a fever, consult the office.

Cracking: If the corners of your mouth were stretched, they may become dry and cracked. Keep them moist with cream or ointment.