

Tony Woo, DDS

In case of emergency, call 781-306-0001 day or night. During after-hours, leave a message with your name and phone #. Dr. Woo or a covering doctor will receive the message.

Call 911 if it is a life-threatening problem.

Post-surgery Instructions

THE DAY OF SURGERY

1. DO NOT DISTURB THE AREA OF SURGERY. Avoid vigorous chewing, excessive spitting, or rinsing as initial healing may be delayed, active bleeding restarted, or infection introduced.

2. Expect minor bleeding or oozing. This bleeding may continue throughout the first day. For the first hour, keep firm pressure on the area of surgery by biting on the gauze sponge. If bleeding persists, continue pressure on a fresh sponge for an additional 30 minutes. Biting on a moist tea bag wrapped in gauze may help control persistent oozing from the surgical site. Tea has an ingredient that promotes blood clotting.

If active bleeding should recur at any time, carefully rinse your mouth with cold water and apply a fresh gauze sponge to the bleeding site. Firm pressure for 15-30 minutes usually controls the problem. Should active bleeding persist, please call the office.

3. LIMIT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY during the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Overexertion may lead to postoperative bleeding and discomfort. When you lie down, keep your head elevated on a pillow.

4. PAIN FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY will be most severe within the first 6-8 hours after the operation. Start taking pain medication before you really feel the pain. Before taking the prescribed narcotic pain medication, have some food or fluid first. Make sure you read the directions carefully before taking the medication. Any pain medication can cause nausea and vomiting.

Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking prescription pain medication. Moderate to severe pain usually does not last longer than 24-48 hours, and there should be no more than just discomfort after the third day. Persistent or increasing pain 3-4 days following oral surgery may be caused by early loss of the blood clot (dry socket) or infection. If you feel that this may be happening to you, contact us right away.

5. SWELLING usually develops during the first 12-24 hours following surgery. It should be peaked by the third day and begin to subside. Swelling can be minimized by wearing an ice pack on the side of your face for 30-45 minutes every hour while you are awake during the first 24 hours, unless you receive special instructions. Anti-inflammatory medications, such as Motrin or Advil, also help decrease swelling. Swelling lasting more than a week or returns after the 1st week usually indicates an infection which needs to be treated.

6. FLUID INTAKE IS IMPORTANT. Start with clear carbonated beverages, such as ginger ale, Seven-Up, or Sprite. Once your stomach has settled, you can advance to other fluids such as water, teas, soda, broth, soups, or juices. Avoid dairy products initially, such as milk, milk shakes, and egg nog. Also avoid hot liquid or chewing until the numbness has worn off, and the bleeding has stopped. It is important to drink plenty of fluids.

7. FOOD SELECTION: Soft, cool foods that require little or no chewing are most easily tolerated at first. A nutritious diet throughout your healing process is most important. Once your stomach is settled, soups, broiled fish, stewed chicken, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, and cooked vegetables can be added to your diet as your comfort indicates.

Ensure, Carnation Instant Breakfast, and yogurt supply excellent added nutrition.

8. Take any special medication such as ANTIBIOTICS we have prescribed on the specified dosing schedule. It is important to take the antibiotics to

completion. If you are given antibiotics and take birth control pills, you should be aware that the birth control pill may become ineffective, therefore take appropriate precautions. Diarrhea when taking antibiotics could be a serious complication and should be immediately reported to the doctor.

9. Take any regularly scheduled medication (for diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.) on your regular schedule unless advised to do otherwise.

10. AVOID SMOKING COMPLETELY, as it tends to slow the healing process and may also contribute to development of a dry socket or infection.

11. DO NOT DRIVE AN AUTOMOBILE for 24 hours following surgery if you have had intravenous sedation/general anesthesia, or if you are taking prescription pain medication.

12. IF YOU WERE INFORMED THAT A SINUS COMMUNICATION OCCURRED DURING SURGERY:

DO NOT blow your nose.

DO NOT sneeze through your nose. If the urge to sneeze arises, sneeze with your mouth open.

DO NOT smoke or use a straw.

AVOID swimming and strenuous exercise for at least one week.

You may have a slight amount of bleeding from the nose for several days.

Occasionally a second procedure may be required if there is a persistent sinus communication.

AFTER THE FIRST DAY

1. On the morning of the day following surgery, rinse your mouth carefully with a solution made by adding 1/2 teaspoon of salt to a large glass of warm water.

Repeat three times a day until remaining soreness subsides. Resume brushing teeth and your regular oral hygiene as soon as possible. Do not avoid brushing your teeth as this will cause more inflammation in the mouth. Please do not use a syringe or Water Pik® to aggressively rinse during the first week. This can dislodge the blood clot and disturb the wound.

2. Stitches are usually placed to control bleeding, aid healing, and help prevent food from collecting in the surgical site. Some sutures may dissolve by themselves and do not have to be removed. It is OK to have this type of suture to fall off in the first few days. Sutures that do not resolve on their own should stay in for the prescribed length of time.

3. ANY SWELLING, SORENESS, OR STIFFNESS IN THE JAW MUSCLES can be relieved by applying a warm moist towel to the affected side of the face several times a day. Moist heat use should be delayed until after the first 24 hours. If swelling, tenderness, or pain should increase after the first few days, call the office.

4. Bruising marks may appear on the skin of the face during the first few days after surgery. Moist heat application will help relieve this condition.

WHAT ARE DRY SOCKETS? Dry sockets continue to be the most common problem people experience following tooth extraction. They arise due to premature loss of a blood clot of the tooth socket. This seems to occur with greater frequency in people who smoke. They usually occur in the lower jaw on the third to fifth day. They cause a deep, dull, continuous aching on the affected side(s). Patients may first notice the pain starting in the ear radiating down towards the chin. It frequently begins in the middle of the night, and the Motrin medication usually doesn't help. Treatment involves placing a medicated dressing in the "empty" tooth socket. This will help decrease the pain. The effectiveness in alleviating the pain lasts for 24-48 hours and usually will require dressing changes every day or two for five to seven days until you feel a difference in the discomfort. The dressing doesn't aid in healing. The only reason to place a dressing is for pain control. The last dressing has to be removed.