

Home Care/ Post Operative Instructions

THINGS TO EXPECT:

1. SWELLING is normal following any surgical procedure in the mouth. It usually reaches its maximum in 24 to 48 hours and usually diminishes by the fourth postoperative day.
2. DISCOMFORT will be greatest during the period when sensation returns to your mouth.
3. BLEEDING or “oozing” for the first 12 to 24 hours is to be expected.

THINGS TO DO:

1. Bite on the gauze placed in your mouth for at least one hour. The majority of bleeding should stop in approximately one hour, however a small amount of bleeding is normal. If the bleeding is more than slight, place a gauze pad over the bleeding area and hold this pack firmly in place so that no blood escapes for 30 minutes. Repeat this as necessary.
2. Swelling is normally expected in proportion to the amount of surgery involved. This swelling may be minimized by the immediate application of ice/cold packs to the outer side of the face that was operated on. Place the pack on the face for 15 minutes. Continue to do this for a few hours, as desired.
3. After WAITING FOR 1 HOUR you should be able to take fluids by mouth. A liquid or soft diet may be necessary for the first 2 days (this would include things like soups, diluted fruit juices, cereals, mashed potatoes). AN ADEQUATE FLUID INTAKE OF AT LEAST TWO QUARTS A DAY IS ESSENTIAL TO PROPER HEALING.
4. TAKE ALL MEDICATIONS AS DIRECTED. The medications I prescribe are principally to control pain and prevent infection. It is possible that I didn't prescribe any medications. For minor pain I recommend taking Ibuprofen (Advil) or Naproxen (Aleve).
5. Do NOT rinse or spit on the DAY OF surgery.
6. Rinsing the mouth with warm salt water (one teaspoon in an 8 oz. glass of water) following meals is advisable beginning the day after surgery. RINSE GENTLY!

THINGS NOT TO DO

1. Do NOT apply heat to the face at any time. This will increase swelling.
2. Do NOT spit, smoke, or drink liquids through a straw. This creates a negative pressure in the mouth and tends to dissolve blood clots, thus increasing the chances of additional bleeding.
3. Avoid strenuous activity for at least 24 hours. Physical activity causes the blood pressure to rise and may cause a renewal of the bleeding.
4. Avoid very hot, spicy and acidic foods as these tend to dissolve blood clots.

If the blood clot is disturbed and comes out, you may develop a dry socket. This is due to bacteria of the mouth infecting the socket, causing pain (and can last up to several weeks). If you think this may be developing call my office immediately for an emergency appointment so I can treat the dry socket and make you comfortable.