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POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

Sometimes the after effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these may apply. Common sense often dictates what you should do. However, when in doubt, follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification.

1. First hour – Bit down gently but firmly on the gauze that have been placed over the surgical area. Do not change them for the first hour unless the bleeding is not being controlled. If active bleeding persists after 1 hour, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 60 minutes and continue to check every our and replace if necessary.
2. First day – Do not disturb the area today. DO NOT rinse vigorously or probe into the area with any objects or your fingers. You may brush your teeth gently. DO NOT SMOKE for at least 48 hours; it is very detrimental to healing.
3. Bleeding – Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, usually it means that the packs are being clenched between your teeth rather than exerting pressure on the surgical area. Try repositioning fresh packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy, you may substitute a regular tea bag (soaked in warm water, squeezed damp dry, and wrapped in a moist gauze) for 30-45 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.
4. Swelling – Some swelling is expected. The swelling reaches its maximum on the 2nd or 3rd day and begins to resolve on the 4th day. Ice packs applied firmly to your cheek adjacent to the site for the first 12 to 24 hours often help to reduce swelling significantly. Keep your head elevated. This will not only help reduce swelling but will help control persistent oozing of blood during the first 24 to 48 hours. Heat applied after 48 hours can help reduce stiffness and swelling.
5. Numbness – After removal of lower teeth, numbness about the corner of the mouth and lower lip (on operated side) may develop. This is called paresthesia and is usually a temporary condition which will correct itself. It may remain for a few days to several months. The incidence of permanent numbness is less than 1%.
6. Sympathetic pain in other teeth – The remaining teeth may ache temporarily. This minor aching is referred to as sympathetic pain and may last 2 to 3 weeks.
7. Pain – for several days immediately following surgery some discomfort is expected. By the 5th day, the pain should be considerably diminished. Many patients tell us that the pain is worse the 2nd or 3rd day. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication – take them as directed. You may supplement this by taking 1 or 2 Tylenol tablets 3 hours after the other dose. If you are able to take ibuprofen take a total of 800mg (4 over the counter Advil) at breakfast, lunch, and dinner for the 3 days following surgery. If pain gets worse on the third day please call the office as you may have dry socket, a condition where bone is exposed at the extraction site.
8. Nausea – Nausea is not uncommon and is usually caused by swallowing blood or a side effect of pain medication. Sip clear liquids to help reduce the chance of nausea occurring.
9. Diet – Eat anything that can be taken with comfort. Be sure to drink plenty of liquids. Avoid spicy foods, temperature doesn't matter. Soft foods are usually recommended; however eat what you are comfortable with. Eat on a normal schedule and don't skip meals; it is important to provide nourishment so healing can take place normally.
10. If anything else of concern develops, please call the office at 771-2230.