

Post Operative Pain

Soreness and stiffness should be expected for 4 to 7 days, especially if the surgery was difficult. Take the first dose of pain medication before the numbness wears off- it is easier to stay ahead of the pain than catch up with it. Take the medications with food to prevent stomach discomfort. Narcotic medications may cause dizziness and/or drowsiness. Please note, that in order to comply with the new Washington State Opioid prescribing rules, narcotic pain medication will be kept to a minimum or avoided altogether.

Bleeding/Bruising

Apply firm pressure to gauze for one to two hours. Bleeding will usually stop in a few hours. Replace gauze after one hour if more than a little bleeding is still present. Oozing of blood for about 24 hours is normal. Keep your head elevated

Protecting the blood clot to prevent dry socket

A blood clot must form and remain in the socket for healing to occur. DO NOT rinse vigorously or spit for 48 hours after surgery. Avoid forming suction in your mouth, such as sucking on straws, hard candies or cigarettes. Avoid carbonated beverages for 4-5 days. Use caution with toothbrush near surgical sites.

Surgical Sites

DO NOT disturb the wound – doing so may cause irritation, infection, or bleeding. The sites will remain open for about 2-3 weeks, and during that time please avoid inserting anything into sockets, including your tongue .

Eating/Drinking

Hydration is very important to the healing process. Even if you do not feel like eating, keep drinking plenty of fluids. DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL for 4-5 days as alcohol dissolves the blood clot and you will end up with a dry socket.

Oral Hygiene

A clean mouth is a healthy mouth and will improve healing, reduce pain, and reduce complications. Begin brushing normally, the evening of surgery, while avoiding surgical sites for the first week. Begin warm salt-water rinses 24 hours after surgery and perform 3-4 times per day for one week after surgery.

Swelling

Expect swelling, especially if the surgery was difficult. Swelling usually begins about 48 hours after surgery and is worst on the 3rd day after surgery. For the first 24-48 hours – place ice on cheek for 20 minutes, then remove for 10 minutes on each affected side. Start this ice application as soon as possible after the procedure. Keep head elevated when resting or sleeping- use extra pillows to elevate your head, or sleep in a recliner the first day, and night following surgery. After the first 24-48 hours, switch to warm moist heat, instead of ice. Keep jaw muscles as active as possible to avoid stiffness.

Antibiotics

These medications should be taken with food because they can cause stomach or intestinal upset. Consuming yogurt or probiotics daily, when taking these medications can help prevent/reduce GI issues.

Stitches

If sutures were used, they will dissolve in 7-14 days and do not need to be removed unless told by your surgeon.

Smoking/Tobacco Use

Avoid smoking for at least 72 hours, longer would be better. Smoking greatly increases chances of postoperative problems like dry socket. DO NOT chew tobacco for one week.

Follow-up

If you had a morning procedure we will call you in the afternoon, for an afternoon procedures, we will call you the following morning. Please let us know if you experience anything unusual including: large amounts of bleeding, pain that persists for longer than 7 days or increases after 4 days, or any unusual reaction to medications.

Medications

Tylenol: Take 325mg every 4-6h as needed for pain
Ibuprofen: Take 400mg every 4-6h as needed for pain
Peridex: swish with one capful twice daily starting two days after surgery. (It may stain teeth/gums/tongue)
Narcotic pain medication(s): If you need it will be taken INSTEAD of the Tylenol and on the same 4-6 hour schedule.