



Post Surgical Instructions

Numbness: Numbness usually lasts approximately 2 hours. Please do not chew anything or drink hot or cold liquids until your numbness is gone.

Discomfort and Oral Hygiene: You can expect to experience some discomfort following your treatment, typically day 3 is the worst and discomfort should start to improve after that. However, to make you more comfortable while you are healing, please do the following:

- For gums: Rinse 3 to 4 times daily with warm salt water (1 teaspoon of table salt in an 8 oz. glass of warm water).
- If we have prescribed Chlorhexidine (Peridex), please use as instructed (one capful twice a day, gently swish and spit, no eating or drinking for 30 minutes after use. We recommend after breakfast and before going to bed. Typically, we have patients use this for 1-2 weeks. You may use saltwater rinses along with this.
- Unless instructed otherwise, please do not brush or floss the surgical site, but do so everywhere else. We will provide further instructions at your post-op visit.

Medication: Pain following dental surgery is usually well controlled with non-narcotic medications such as Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), Naproxen (Aleve) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol). Narcotic medications (such as, Vicodin or Codeine) may be additionally beneficial for pain control. Narcotic medications may cause drowsiness and/or nausea. To minimize stomach upset, take your medication with at least ½ glass of water and after meals.

Alternating Medications: For those people who can safely take both NSAIDs and Acetaminophen we recommend the following:

- Take Ibuprofen 600 mg tablet (often prescribed) and record the time. Three hours later take one tablet of acetaminophen (over-the counter extra strength is 500 mg). Continue to alternate each medication every three hours. In the evening you do not need to set an alarm to get up to take medication. Just begin again when you awaken. Alternate for at least two to three days if needed, but some people take these medications for over a week. Discomfort lasting up to one week or even beyond is normal and should not be a cause for concern. Even if you are feeling better after the first several days, a rebound of the discomfort may present at days 6-8 and this is normal. DO NOT exceed 2,400 mg of IBUPROFEN and/or 3,000 mg of ACETAMINOPHEN in a 24-hour period. If you take a narcotic that has acetaminophen in it, take it IN LIEU OF your over-the-counter acetaminophen.

Activity: You can generally resume normal physical activities a few days following dental surgery. However, it is recommended that you limit your activities and return home to rest the day of your surgery. This is especially important if you have taken sedative medications.

Bleeding: For several hours following surgery and even up to 48 hours after surgery, a small amount of blood may appear in your saliva. If bleeding persists, try to localize the area from where the bleeding is coming. Apply firm but gentle pressure directly to the site of the bleeding with a moistened gauze pad or black tea bag for 40 minutes. If you have a liver clot over the surgical area (a black mucous coating) wipe it completely away with wet gauze and apply wet gauze or a tea bag on the site for at least 40-60 minutes. If severe bleeding continues and you cannot stop it, you can call the office during normal business hours. If you are not able to reach someone in a timely manner, go to your local emergency room. Your gums may bleed for a few days when you start brushing or flossing (once we've instructed you to do so). Don't be alarmed as this is normal.

Brushing: Brush thoroughly but gently, avoiding the surgical area as instructed until your post-op appointment. If mouthwash was prescribed, it will clean the surgical area. Only use the prescribed mouthwash for the two weeks after surgery or instructed otherwise by your dentist.

Important Precautions that if not observed, may lead to poor surgical outcomes:

- Smoking (including vaping) is contraindicated after surgery and must be avoided.
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages should be avoided for 24 hours after surgery or longer if you were prescribed a medication where alcohol is contra-indicated. Follow the directions on all prescription medications
- If you were provided an essix retainer, wear the retainer starting the day after surgery unless otherwise instructed.
- Avoid using a straw for four days and cautiously spit after brushing.
- DO NOT look at the surgical site (i.e. no pulling on your lips) this will interfere with the surgical outcome and may cause you concern by what you see. True indications for concern are a fever and bad taste, in which case, please call the office.
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach and the side of your face on which the surgery was performed.

Additional Surgical Instructions:

- For implant patients: Most patients have a cap (refer to the picture below), which was placed over the implant that you can see. Over time this may become loose or fall out. This is not a cause for alarm, simply call the office and we will schedule a time when you bring it in for re-installation.



- Stitches may have been placed during surgery. Dissolvable stitches may be digested or spit out. If stitches begin to loosen and dangle to the extent that they are uncomfortable, please call the office and we will trim them. However, this is normal and if comfortable, the loosened stitches may be left alone.
- You may have had a bone graft placed during your surgery. It is normal for some of the granules (which look like sand) to trickle out over several weeks. In addition, if a membrane was placed you may see that it is exposed and will appear as a white area. This is normal and eventually will be covered by your gums. By the time of your post-op appointment it is not expected that the surgical site be completely closed. It may take 6-8 weeks for tissue to completely heal.

Nutrition: A good diet is important for healing. A semi-soft high protein diet is recommended. Avoid hot, sticky, chewy, hard, and crunchy foods since they may injure healing tissues (e.g. seeds, nuts, chips, peanut butter, etc.). Food suggestions include scrambled eggs, yogurt, bananas, instant breakfast drinks, applesauce, cottage cheese, pasta, chicken, oatmeal, etc. (very cold foods or drinks, such as ice cream or milk shakes sometimes also cause discomfort to your teeth and should be eaten cautiously). Patients do well with cutting foods up and eating on the non-surgical side.

Temperature: Avoid extreme hot or cold on your teeth, as temperature sensitivity is common after surgery. Sensitivity is normal and may last from a few days to several months. You should expect gradual improvement. At the time of your follow up we can discuss the use of anti-sensitivity toothpastes such as Sensodyne or concentrated fluoride gels such as Prevident or Gel-Kam.

Post-Surgical Problems: Swelling and bruising is common. You may use an ice pack in 15-minute intervals to help with this. If you experience swelling that increases after 3 days, fever, discomfort that is not controlled by the prescribed medications, an adverse reaction to any medications, or if you are uncertain about your progress in healing, please call the office.

Call us: If you have any further questions or concerns, please call the office at **203-630-1312**. For after-hours questions, you can leave a message for our on-call doctor by calling our main number and pressing the number 3. Messages will be checked after normal business hours from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm and then again after 8:00 am. If this is an emergency and you cannot wait for the doctor to return your call, please go to urgent care or the ER for assistance.