



NORTHEAST ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

Post-Operative Patient Guide

9860 Westpoint Drive, Suite 100
Indianapolis, IN 46256
317-841-1100

Dr. Brent T. Garrison, D.D.S., M.S.D.
Dr. Robert P. Alderman D.M.D.
Dr. Patrick S. Kelly, D.D.S.

Feel free to contact our office with any questions or concerns you may have.
During business hours call our office: 317-841-1100.

Monday & Wednesday: 7:30 am - 4:30
pm Tuesday: 7:00 am - 3:00 pm
Thursday: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Friday: 7:00 am - 2:00 pm

For after office hours emergencies, call 317-426-7209.

In order to assure rapid healing and minimize discomfort after a surgical procedure, it is highly recommended that you follow the post-operative instructions indicated. Unnecessary pain and complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if these instructions are followed carefully.

Bleeding

Place gauze **directly** over surgical site and bite down on it (do not chew). After 30-45 minutes, remove gauze and check for bleeding. Repeat with fresh gauze as needed until bleeding has reduced to a slow “oozing” or stops all together. Some bleeding for the first day or two is normal. If bleeding persists, or is excessive, please call us.

- ◆ Do not rinse or spit for the first 24 hours. This will disturb the blood clot and prolong bleeding.
- ◆ Do not use a drinking straw for the first two days. Smoking is also very harmful to the blood clot and should be kept to a minimum during this time.
- ◆ For continued bleeding, use a tea bag dipped in cold water and bite down on it for 30-45 minutes.

Medications

Have your prescriptions filled and take your medications as directed on each prescription bottle. Do not operate machinery or drive a car for 24 hours after your surgery if you had IV anesthesia (through a needle in your arm) or after taking prescription pain medication. Avoid alcoholic beverages. For moderate discomfort, adults may use aspirin or Tylenol, one to two tablets every 3-4 hours. Two to four Ibuprofen tablets (Advil, Motrin) can be taken every 6 hours.

- ◆ For the most effective pain relief, take your first dose of pain medicine after you get home **before the numbness wears off**.
- ◆ To avoid an upset stomach, take your medicine with light food, such as soup or a milkshake.
- ◆ Female surgery patients currently taking birth control pills should use another form of contraception during your entire cycle after your procedure. Certain antibiotics may make birth control pills ineffective.

Prescription Refills

If refills of medication are needed, please make sure to **call 24 hours in advance, during office hours. PLEASE PLAN AHEAD!**

- ◆ Many pain medications require a written prescription in order to be filled, such as hydrocodone or oxycodone. We cannot phone in these refills. You will need to make arrangements to have the prescription picked up at our office or you will have to allow time for the prescription to be mailed to you.

Diet

Nutrition is very important after your surgery for healing and for feeling better after your surgery.

- ◆ Do not eat any foods that require chewing while you are numb.

Diet (cont.)

- ◆ Once you are able, begin to eat solid foods, as they will help to limber up muscle stiffness in your jaw that is normal after surgery. Gentle exercise may also help to relieve muscle tightness.

Ice

Apply ice packs immediately to all areas of the face where surgery was performed. Keep the ice packs on for 30 minutes, then remove them for 30 minutes. Continue to repeat this cycle to help control pain and swelling. Application of ice packs is most helpful for the first 24 to 48 hours after surgery.

Swelling/Bruising

Swelling after any surgical procedure is normal and usually occurs 24 to 48 hours after surgery, especially after removal of a difficult tooth or impacted teeth. Swelling and/or bruising may be minimal or extensive and may persist for several days. After 48 hours, applying moist heat may help to reduce any remaining swelling.

Earache/Sore Throat

It is normal to experience a slight earache or sore throat after surgery.

Fever

You may experience a slight fever for 24 to 48 hours after surgery. This is normal. If the fever persists after 48 hours, however, please notify us.

Oral Hygiene

Good oral hygiene is extremely important for rapid and uncomplicated recovery. Brush your teeth and rinse **gently** at bedtime the day of your surgery. The day after surgery, brush as you normally would and begin rinsing with warm salt water solution (1/2 teaspoon of salt in a warm glass of water) four to five times per day for one week.

- ◆ **Do not use commercial mouthwashes** because they contain alcohol that can irritate the surgical site.

If you were given a syringe to help cleanse the surgical area, begin using it **after five or six days**. Irrigate the area with warm water at least twice a day until the holes have healed (usually within three to four weeks).

Pain

Most discomfort should begin to subside three to four days after surgery. If you continue to have pain after that, please call our office.

Numbness

Some surgeries are performed very close to nerves, which can sometimes cause numbness or altered sensations, especially of the lower lip or tongue. These conditions are usually temporary and will likely disappear when swelling goes down and the nerve heals. Should numbness persist beyond the first week, please call our office.