

Triangle Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Dr. David M. Lambert, DDS, PA

919-806-2898

-POST OPERATIVE CARE FOR ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY -

WHAT TO DO AFTER SURGERY

Extraction wounds usually heal quickly and without complications if simple precautions are taken. However, these wounds should not be neglected and they should be given certain attention. Cooperation with your surgeon is important. You should reduce your activities for several hours after surgery. This helps reduce bleeding and permits the formation of a clot in the area of operation, which is necessary for healing.

WHAT TO EAT

To help the healing process, try not to miss a meal after surgery. Soft nutritious foods such as: chopped meats, bland soups, mashed potatoes, soft boiled eggs, custards, yogurt and cooked cereals may be eaten without disturbing the blood clot. Eat as often as you can for the first few days. Then solid foods should be added. Be sure to drink large amounts of liquids (water, 7 Up, Sprite, Ginger Ale, Jello) until nausea/vomiting stops and then gradually resume a soft diet. Food in the stomach is important - it helps minimize reactions to any medicines you may have had prescribed.

It is not uncommon for patients to complain of nausea and even vomiting. If this is the case, eating will only make the problem worse. It is better to drink clear liquids (water, 7 Up, Sprite, Ginger Ale, Jello) until nausea/vomiting stops and then gradually resume a soft diet. Do not hesitate to contact the office if you have questions.

BLEEDING

Remove the gauze pads from your mouth 20 minutes after leaving the office. Some oozing of blood may continue for a short time after the operation and may persist for several days. However, if there is more than just oozing, the following procedure will help control it:

1. Take a clean gauze pad and gently wipe blood from the mouth and from over the wound.
2. Place another clean, folded gauze pad directly on the bleeding area.
3. Close the teeth tightly over this pad so there is pressure against the bleeding area.
4. Change the gauze pad every 15 minutes and keep changing the gauze pads until bleeding subsides.
5. If bleeding persists, or any unusual condition appears; promptly call this office.

FOR RELIEF OF DISCOMFORT

If you have been given a prescription, please have it filled promptly and take the medication exactly as directed. If you have not been given a prescription for the relief of discomfort, take Tylenol every 4 hours for as long as necessary. The application of an ice bag to the face in the area of surgery can be helpful in the relief of discomfort and prevention of swelling. This will be helpful for the first 6 hours after surgery.

RINSING OF THE MOUTH

The blood clots should be given time to form and not be disturbed. Therefore, the mouth **should not be rinsed during the day of surgery**. Beginning the second day, rinse your mouth using 1-2 cups of warm water mixed with 1/2 teaspoon of salt after every meal and at bedtime. We do not recommend the use of alcohol based mouthwashes (Listerine, etc.) for the first 2-3 days postop. The teeth should be brushed as usual. It is important to maintain these habits of oral hygiene so that the wound may heal well and not become infected.

INFORMATION REGARDING REMOVAL OF IMPACTED TEETH

The removal of impacted wisdom teeth is quite different than the extraction of erupted teeth. The following conditions may occur, all of which are considered normal:

1. The area operated on may swell. This may last 10 days to several weeks.
2. The swollen area may become quite large.
3. Trismus (tightness) of the muscle may cause difficulty in opening the mouth and require treatment.
4. You may have a slight earache.
5. A sore throat may develop.
6. Numbness about the corner of the mouth, lip and chin on the side from which the tooth was removed may develop. This is an unavoidable complication which usually corrects itself.
7. Your other teeth possibly will ache temporarily. This we refer to as sympathetic pain and is a temporary condition.
8. If the corners of the mouth are stretched they may dry out and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with a cream or ointment.
9. There will be a cavity where the tooth was removed. As well as possible, this should be rinsed following meals with warm salt water starting the day after surgery. This cavity will gradually fill in with new tissue.
10. There may be a slight elevation of temperature for 24 to 48 hours. If temperature continues, notify us.