



Care Following Oral Surgery

Proper care of the mouth following oral surgery procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area.

1. **To protect the blood clot**, maintain gentle pressure by biting on the gauze that has been placed over the surgical area for 1 hour or until it is no longer actively bleeding. Remove and replace the gauze at regular intervals until bleeding ceases. A tea bag can be gently moistened and wrapped in a piece of gauze if bleeding is persistent. Keep head elevated.
2. **Do not rinse** or use a mouthwash for at least 24 hours. After 24 hours, rinse with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon table salt in 8 oz warm water) 2-3 times per day. The use of commercial mouthwashes during the healing period is not encouraged.
3. **The toothbrush** may be carefully used in the area of the mouth not involved in the surgical procedure. A clean mouth heals faster. A syringe, if provided, should be used with warm water to flush extraction site. Use it daily beginning one week after surgery for about one month.
4. **Discomfort** following oral surgery is normal and expected. If medication has been given or prescribed, take as instructed. It is normal to improve each day. If you are experiencing severe pain several days after surgery, contact our office.
5. **Eating.** Adequate food and fluid intake following surgery and/or general extractions is most important. If you find that eating your regular diet is too difficult, you may supplement your diet for several days with commercial liquid nutritional supplements, milk additives or blended foods. You may progress slowly to heavier foods.
6. **Avoid** all excessive activity in the following few days. Do not pick at the surgical site. Do not consume liquids through a straw. Avoid alcoholic beverages while taking medications. Do not smoke for 6-7 days.
7. **Sutures** seldom require removal. A "dry socket dressing", if used, always requires removal. Please make an appointment.
8. **To control swelling**, gently apply ice packs to the area for periods of 20 minutes on, 10 minutes off. This procedure should continue for the first 48 hours only. Warm, moist packs may be substituted after 48 hours to aid in the reduction of swelling.
9. **Allergic reaction.** May cause generalized rash, itching, etc. Contact our office if this occurs.
10. **Drowsiness** may follow administration of medications. Please do not operate machinery and/or automobiles for at least 24 hours after medications are administered. Certain oral medications may require additional precautionary time.
11. **Do not hesitate to call** if any questions arise. Our office number is 920-788-3542