

Care After Oral Surgery

This sheet will tell you how to take care of yourself after oral surgery and who to call if you have any problems.

What to Expect

After oral surgery it is normal to have:

- Slight oozing of blood for a few hours
- Swelling which usually reaches its maximum about two days after surgery
- Moderate discomfort which can be controlled by taking pain medication, as ordered
- Discoloration or bruising on the side of the surgery
- A slight fever during the first 24 hours

Pain

Take your pain medication as ordered. If your pain is not decreasing by the third day after surgery, call one of the phone numbers at the end of this sheet.

Bleeding

You can control moderate bleeding by rolling sterile gauze into a ball, placing it over the surgical area, and using firm biting pressure for at least 40 minutes. Do this while in a comfortable upright position. This should control most bleeding. If bleeding does not stop, repeat this process once. If bleeding still does not stop, call one of the phone numbers listed at the end of this sheet.

Swelling

Apply an ice bag to your face, directly over the area that was operated on. Do this for the first 12 hours after surgery. Follow this schedule: 20 minutes on, then 15 minutes off, followed by 20 minutes on etc. Do not use ice after the first 12 hours.

Twenty-four hours after surgery, it may feel good and soothing to put a warm compress on your face every four hours.

Rinsing

Do not rinse your mouth for at least 24 hours after surgery, or until bleeding has completely stopped.

After 24 hours, gently rinse your mouth with warm salt water (add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt to a full glass of warm water) every four hours.

Activity

Avoid strenuous activity for the first 24 hours after surgery.

Avoid using straws.

Smoking

Do not smoke for 48 hours after surgery.

Diet

Drink plenty of liquids. Eat soft foods for the first 24 hours. After that, eat foods that are easy to chew.

Problem Signs

- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Severe pain
- Swelling that does not decrease after three days
- Temperature above 100° or chills
- Any questions or concerns
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Call the Dental Service at (612) 725-2039, Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. At any other time call Urgent Care at (612) 467-2771.

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