

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURGERY

You have just had a surgical procedure. It is normal to have some bleeding as well as some generalized swelling, pain, bruising, and/or discoloration from the surgical site. The next couple of weeks are important for the healing of your mouth. The following guidelines will help promote healing and improve the conditions in your mouth for healing:

1. The general area where the surgery has taken place will be painful over the next 3 to 5 days. We recommend taking 800mg of ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB) every 6 hours for the first 2 to 3 days and then as needed thereafter. If you are unable to take ibuprofen or need additional pain relief, we recommend taking 650mg Tylenol (2 regular-strength tablets) every 6 hours. If you are taking both the ibuprofen and Tylenol together, alternate them taking the different medications 3 hours apart for maximum benefit. If you have been prescribed pain medication following your procedure, take this medication as directed. Do not take the Tylenol while taking prescribed narcotic pain medication as the narcotic medication also contains Tylenol.
2. Sutures have been placed around the surgical site. We recommend that you do not inspect the surgical area to prevent the sutures from being dislodged. Also, take care brushing around the area until the sutures fall out. Please do not floss the area until the sutures are removed.
3. To help reduce any swelling that may occur, we recommend that you use your ice pack today and tomorrow. Wrap the ice pack in a thin cloth or towel and place it to the outside of your face over the site for 20 minutes. Leave it off for 20 minutes before replacing it over the site. Continue this throughout the first day and second day if possible.
4. After the second day following surgery, begin rinsing the surgical area gently with chlorhexidine two times a day for 30 seconds for 2 to 3 weeks. Rinse gently to remove food debris and to cleanse the area. Do not rinse too aggressively as to avoid hurting the tissues and dislodging the sutures.
5. It is not uncommon for the surgical site to feel slightly numb or different in the surrounding area. This feeling will usually return to normal within 4 to 6 weeks.
6. Eat soft, cool foods for the first 24 hours. Avoid hard, sharp, and hot foods for the first couple of days.
7. Do not rinse vigorously, spit, or use a straw until the sutures dissolve. These types of activities may dislodge the blood clot and delay the tissue healing.
8. Avoid vigorous physical activity for 24 hours.
9. If you smoke, we recommend you refrain from smoking for at least 24 to 48 hours after surgery. Smoking delays tissue healing.
10. If a biopsy was taken during surgery, it will be sent to VCU School of Dentistry for analysis. You will receive a bill from them. Most medical health insurance companies will help cover a portion of the cost of the biopsy.
11. It is recommended you return in 1 month and 6 months to take a digital image of the area and check for healing.

Don't be alarmed if you have swelling and/or bruising. This is normal. Mild bleeding is also normal. You may have some spots of blood on your pillow in the morning. If the bleeding becomes heavy and bright red, apply firm pressure to the area. If the incision site opens or bleeding continues, please contact our office immediately.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact our office at (505) 291-8630.