

# Center For Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

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## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER SURGERY

1. **Pain** in varying amounts is to be expected after oral surgery. Its severity usually depends on the extent of the surgery. If a prescription was given for pain relief, have it filled and take the first tablet before the numbness in your jaw has completely worn off. Take additional tablets thereafter for pain relief according to directions on the prescription. If no prescription was given, take Tylenol or Ibuprofen in doses as recommended on the label, every 4 hours as needed for pain relief. Take any other medicine prescribed according to the directions on the label.
2. **SWELLING** in modest amounts commonly develops after oral surgery and may reach its peak in 24 to 48 hours and then should begin resolving. Elevate your head and place an ice bag over the affected area for the first 24 to 36 hours after surgery to help reduce the amount of swelling.
3. **BLEEDING** should be minimal by the time you leave the office. Bite on your gauze packs for at least one hour after surgery. **DO NOT RINSE YOUR MOUTH THE DAY OF SURGERY.** Rinsing may dislodge blood clots and restart bleeding. If bleeding persists after several hours, place folded gauze – 2x2 squares, over the surgical areas and bite firmly for one hour; sit in a chair (do not lie down) and place an ice bag over affected side of face. If bleeding persists, wrap a moistened tea bag in gauze and bite for two hours. If bleeding persists call the office.
4. **DISCOLORATION** of the face over the operated area may occur. This is due to some bleeding into the tissues and will resolve by itself in several days.
5. **FOLLOWING** tooth extractions, some small bone chips or sharp fragments may work loose and come thru the gums. These are not the roots, but they can be removed by your surgeon if they cause discomfort.
6. **YOUR DIET** should include only soft and /or liquid foods for the first 24 hours for comfort. Fluids are especially important the first day (at least 2 quarts) to prevent dehydration. After the first 24 hours you can eat whatever is most comfortable.
7. **NAUSEA** may occur after surgery and is usually due to the prescribed pain medication. Stop the pain medication and take an antacid (Pepto-Bismol, Maalox, ext.). If vomiting occurs and is severe, call the office for a prescription for anti-nausea medication.

8. **GOOD ORAL HYGIENE** after oral surgery promotes more rapid healing. Starting the day after surgery, rinse the mouth with warm salt water or a flavored mouthwash after each meal. Brush the teeth with a soft toothbrush. For the first few days, clean the teeth in the area of surgery with cotton swabs, (Q-tips), very gently.

9. **A GENTLE LAXATIVE** (Milk of Magnesia – one ounce at bedtime) may be required if narcotic pain medication has caused constipation.

10. **AVOID** heavy physical activity for the first 24 hours after oral surgery.

11. **IF ANY** of the following occur, call the office immediately: severe bleeding, high fever, rapidly expanding swelling with difficulty swallowing or breathing or persistent vomiting.

12. **PLEASE NOTE** that antibiotics may make birth control medications ineffective.

**If you have had IMPACTED TEETH removed:**

1. You can expect at LEAST 2 to 3 days of significant pain - requiring prescribed pain medication for relief, as well as facial swelling and stiffness or difficulty opening your jaw.

2. Do not plan to return to work or perform vigorous activities for at least 24 to 48 hours.

3. If 3 to 5 days after wisdom tooth removal you develop a persistent throbbing ache in the jaws, earache and bad taste in the mouth, you may have a “dry socket.” Call the office right away. If you have a dry socket, we will want you to return for treatment to relieve the symptoms.

Please be sure you have made an appointment for post-operative check-up.

If you have any questions or problems, call the office at (770) 962-0515 (Lawrenceville) or (770) 831-6602 (Dacula)