

# POSTOP CARE FOR WISDOM TEETH

## Bleeding

Bleeding after surgery may continue for several hours. The best way to stop bleeding is to place a piece of folded, damp gauze over the extraction site and gently bite for 30-60 minutes. Rest quietly with your head elevated. If bleeding continues, use gauze for an additional 30 minutes. Remove the gauze when sleeping, eating or taking medications. You may wish to cover your pillow with a towel to avoid staining. Bleeding should always be evaluated by looking directly at the surgical site. Pink or blood-tinged saliva may be seen for 2-3 days following the surgery and does not indicate a problem. Bleeding should never be severe. If so, it may mean that the pack is not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the gauze. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may **substitute a black tea bag** (soaked in hot water, squeezed damp-dry, allow it to cool, and wrapped in moist gauze) for 30-45 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

## Swelling

Swelling is the body's normal reaction to surgery and healing. The swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its peak for 2-3 days. After this time, the swelling should decrease but may persist for 7-10 days.

Swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Apply the ice packs to the outside of the face 20 minutes on and then 20 minutes off while awake for the first 24 hours.

## **Pain**

Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. If you do not have an allergy to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications like Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) we recommend taking this prior to the local anesthetic wearing off. More severe pain may require a narcotic pain medication. Alternate Ibuprofen and the narcotic medication.

First, take narcotic medication then a couple of hours later take 600mg (3 tablets / 200mg each) of Ibuprofen. Alternate these medications as prescribed. While taking a narcotic pain medication you may not drive or operate mechanical machinery. The prescribed pain medication will make you drowsy. Once you feel like you can stop the narcotic, use Ibuprofen or Tylenol. All medication should NOT exceed the recommended dosage. Discomfort should subside daily. If not, please call our office.

## **Dry Sockets**

If a dry socket occurs (loss of blood clot from socket) there is constant pain that may radiate to other areas including ear, jaw, and teeth. Symptoms of a dry socket do not occur until the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> day after the procedure. If you do not have improvement during the first few days following the procedure, call the office. A medicated dressing may be placed if medications do not resolve the discomfort.

To help prevent a dry socket avoid vigorous rinsing, sucking on the wound, spitting, using a straw, smoking, and exercising for 2-3 days after procedure. You may gently rinse your mouth with a diluted mouth rinse of your choice after one day.

## **Diet**

After I.V. sedation, start with liquids. While numb, patients should avoid hot liquids or foods. Patients may have applesauce, pudding, or Jell-O. Once

numbness wear off patients can progress to solid foods, chewing away from the surgical sites. Patients should avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas.

## Fainting Precaution

If you suddenly sit or stand from a lying position, you may become dizzy, especially if you have not eaten or had fluids. Therefore, immediately following surgery, if you are lying down, make sure to sit for at least on full minute before standing.

## Oral Hygiene

The best way to prevent infection and ensure healing is to keep your mouth clean. Clean your mouth thoroughly after each meal beginning the day after surgery. Use a soft bristle toothbrush and toothpaste after meals and at bedtime. Should bleeding resume after brushing, repeat the use of gauze as described above. DO NOT rinse your mouth the day of surgery. Begin using the water syringe on **day 2** to gently flush out debris that has gathered in the extraction socket(s). The syringe should be used after eating. You should discontinue using the syringe when you no longer get debris out of the socket after it is flushed.

## Activity

For the first 48 hours, you should rest and relax with no physical activity. After 48 hours, resume activity as tolerated.

## Healing

Bad breath is common and will disappear as healing occurs. Two to three days following surgery, white, possibly hard tissue may be seen in the

surgical site. This signifies normal, healing tissue. Completer healing of the extraction site may take 6-8 weeks.

## **Suture/Stitches**

Sutures will resorb or fall out on their own. It is normal for a suture to come out on the day of surgery. If bleeding occurs because the sutures have fallen out, bite on gauze to apply pressure as described above.

## **Antibiotics**

If an antibiotic is prescribed, take as directed and until it is gone. Antibiotics help prevent infection. Make sure to call the office if a rash or other unfavorable reactions occur.

## **Foods to Eat and Drink**

### **While Numb**

#### **Drink:**

- Water/Ice Chips
- Juice
- Popsicles
- Smoothie or Milkshake (no straw)

#### **Eat:**

- Applesauce
- Jell-O
- Pudding
- Yogurt

## **Soft Foods When Numbness is Gone**

- Mashed Potatoes
- Pasta
- Eggs
- Pancakes
- Creamed Cereals
- Soups (be careful-not too hot)

## **Increase Diet As Tolerated**

## **Emergencies**

- Possible allergic reaction – rash, sudden swelling, difficulty breathing. You develop difficulty seeing, become dizzy or pass out. You have difficulty speaking, breathing or swallowing. (Call 911!!)
- You have severe headaches or notice changes in your vision.
- Fever over 101 degrees by mouth.
- Uncontrollable bleeding not resolved by methods named above (contact the office immediately).
- Unexpected swelling around the surgical site.
- Signs of infection (warmth, drainage/pus, severe pain, severe swelling etc.)
- Increased redness, warmth, hardness of the IV site.
- New numbness or tingling in your face (persistent numbness beyond 24 hours).
- Inability to urinate. Continued nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or constipation.
- Jaw stiffness is expected after surgery and usually begins to improve within 5 to 7 days. Notify us if it does not improve.
- Any other unusual or abnormal symptoms.

**NOTE: Typically, pain and swelling will peak on the third day postoperatively. If the pain medications are keeping you comfortable and the swelling is not severe, then you are probably doing as we would expect.**