

POST OPERATIVE CARE FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

1. Rest on the day of your surgery, especially if intravenous medications were used. Keep your head elevated to help reduce swelling. You should not drive, operate machinery, or engage in any strenuous activity if narcotic pain medications are being taken.
2. Change the gauze every 30 minutes for the first two (2) hours, then discontinue. Be sure to apply firm pressure on the gauze, avoid chewing on it or talking with the gauze in your mouth. The gauze **should be removed** to take medications, drink liquids, or eat food. Some bleeding is to be expected throughout the day. Avoid spitting; it will cause bleeding to persist. If persistent bleeding occurs, **gently** rinse your mouth with ice water and place a moistened tea bag over the bleeding area and bite down firmly for one (1) hour. Repeat if necessary.
3. **Pain, swelling, and bruising is normal and is to be expected.** Apply ice to your face over areas where surgery was performed for two days. Keep ice on for twenty minutes intervals or alternate from side to side if there was more than one site. **Swelling will be its greatest on the third and fourth day after surgery.** Moist heat may be applied to the involved area beginning 48 hours after surgery. **If lower molars were removed, stretch your mouth open frequently starting the day of surgery. This will reduce pain and jaw tightness.**
4. Alternate 800mg Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) with 500mg Acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4 hours, **only if you can tolerate these medications.** It is best to take these medications before the local anesthesia (numbness) wears off. Prescription pain medications should be taken after a meal. Narcotic pain medications may cause nausea if taken on an empty stomach or not eating substantial meals. **DO NOT drink alcoholic beverages while taking narcotic pain medication. ONLY TAKE NARCOTIC MEDICATION IF NEEDED AND ONLY AS DIRECTED.**
5. **DO NOT smoke or use any tobacco product for five days. This will cause more discomfort, complicate your recovery, increase the risk for infection and delay wound healing. Smoking cannabis or drinking alcohol prior to surgery will cause anesthetic complications. Smoking cannabis or drinking alcohol may require higher doses of medication for anesthesia and pain management.**
6. It is important to drink at least two - three liters of water or clear juice each day after surgery. **Failure to drink will cause fever, nausea, vomiting and fainting.** Do not use a straw for drinking. Advance your diet as tolerated. Try to resume a normal diet by the third day after surgery.
7. **Tooth brushing can be started on the day of surgery. Warm salt-water rinses should be started 24 hours after the surgery. Add one (1) teaspoon of salt to an eight-ounce glass of warm water for rinsing. This is especially important after meals. Gently rinse with warm salt water at least four (4) times a day for 7 days. It is not recommended to use mouthwash unless prescribed.**
8. **If the wound is not properly cleaned, an infection can develop one - two months after the surgery. A fee will apply to treat infections due to poor wound care. There will be a re-evaluation fee for any appointments after 90 days.**
9. **If you have any problems or questions, please call Dr. Scioscia: (803) 951-7343. Prescriptions will not be called in after hours.**