

Long Family Dental

POST OPERATIVE CARE FOR EXTRACTIONS

Immediately Following Surgery:

- Keep the gauze pad placed over the surgical area with pressure applied by biting down until the bleeding stops.
- Take prescribed pain medication as soon as you begin to feel discomfort, usually when the anesthetic becomes less effective.
- Do not suck on a straw, spit, or smoke.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable.
- Place ice packs on the side of your face where surgery was performed. Refer to section on Swelling.
- For mild discomfort, use Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). DO NOT take more than 800mg every 4 – 6 hours.
- AVOID vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the affected area after surgery. It may initiate bleeding by dislodging the blood clot.

Diet After general anesthetic or IV sedation, we recommend that you start with liquids. While numb, patients should avoid hot liquids or foods. Patients may have applesauce, pudding or jello. Once numbness wears off, patients can progress to soft solid foods chewing away from the surgical sites. AVOID nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, rice, grits, and foods that are very small that may become lodged in the area. Also AVOID hot food or liquid.

Oral Hygiene Do not rinse or spit vigorously for the first 24 hours following surgery. You can brush your teeth the night of the surgery, but rinse gently. Clean your mouth thoroughly by rinsing four times a day and after eating. Do this gently as to not dislodge the blood clot. To rinse, mix a teaspoon of salt and a cup of warm water. DO NOT use a non-prescription rinse for 24 hours after surgery. Clean the rest of your mouth as usual using a soft toothbrush and toothpaste. Should bleeding resume after brushing, repeat the use of gauze as described below.

Swelling In order to reduce surgical swelling, we recommend covered ice packs or a cold compress applied to the face over the surgical site for the first 24 hours after your procedure. We suggest that for the first 3 hours you apply ice pack directly to the area for 20 minutes on, and 20 minutes off. If possible, elevate the head with an extra pillow during the first 2 nights after surgery to reduce swelling. Swelling may continue to increase over a three day period and then begin to resolve, but it may persist for up to 7 – 10 days.

If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. If swelling is significant, you can use a moist heat compress to help suppress it.

Sutures Sutures will resorb or fall out on their own unless the Dr. recommends that you come back for suture removal. If bleeding occurs because the sutures have fallen out, bite on gauze to apply pressure as described below in Managing Bleeding.

Managing Bleeding

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following a surgical procedure. Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon. Bleeding is best controlled by the use of pressure. We've placed a gauze pack on the surgical site(s) to limit bleeding while the clot forms. The gauze packs should be left in place for 30 to 40 minutes after you leave the practice.

Should slight bleeding continue, bite down softly on the gauze, making sure they remain in place. Continue to change the gauze packs every 30-40 minutes if there is continual bleeding. To replace gauze, fold a clean piece into a pad thick enough to bite on. Dampen the pad and place it directly on the surgical site.

If bleeding continues despite the above efforts, boil a small amount of strong tea, for 5 minutes. Then soak a small gauze compress in the cooled tea and place firmly on the site that is bleeding. Close the jaws tightly and hold for 30 minutes. Repeat if necessary.

Bleeding should never be severe. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call us.

Managing Pain

The length of time you experience numbness varies, depending on the type of anesthetic you've received. Post operative pain will be the most severe the first day after surgery. While your mouth is numb you'll want to be careful not to bite on your cheek, lip, or tongue. The numbness should subside within a few hours.

It is beneficial to take your pain medication before your numbness wears off. Prescription tablets for pain relief should be taken according to instructions. DO NOT drive or operate machinery and AVOID alcoholic beverages. DO NOT take prescription pain medication on an empty stomach. If you are not allergic to non-steroidal medications like Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), we recommend alternating your prescription pain medication with 400mg of Ibuprofen.

If pain persists, please call us.

Managing Infection

If you are prescribed antibiotics, it is essential that you follow the instructions and complete the course. Antibiotics may be prescribed to help prevent infection. Take the entire prescription until gone.

Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are currently taking birth control pills, they will be inactivated by the antibiotic.

Healing

After a surgical extraction a blood clot will form in the surgical area. This is an important step of the normal healing process. You should therefore avoid activities that might disturb the surgical area.

Do not rinse your mouth vigorously or probe the area with any objects, including your fingers. Do not smoke, spit, or drink through a straw for 72 hours following your surgery.

Avoid strenuous activity for the first 24 hours after your procedure. This will reduce bleeding and help the blood clot to form.

Contact Us

If you are concerned about any matter regarding the surgery or recovery; please call our office.