



FLORIDA FACIAL SURGERY CENTER

DR. JAMES GIFT • BOARD CERTIFIED • AMERICAN BOARD OF ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

POSTOPERATIVE CARE FOLLOWING EXTRACTIONS

Proper care of the mouth following surgical procedures can reduce potential complications and speed healing of the surgical area(s). Read these instructions and ask a member of our staff any questions you may have.

- Do not drive for 24 hours following IV sedation.
- Immediately following surgery, keep light pressure on the bleeding area with gauze for **one hour** by biting firmly on gauze with teeth together. Remove gauze after 1 hour. Replace gauze only if extensive bleeding is visible. **Do not leave gauze in your mouth overnight.** Gauze should apply pressure to the surgical site, usually behind the teeth.
- Do not rinse your mouth the day of surgery and do not use a straw. **PLEASE BE SURE TO BRUSH YOUR TEETH THE DAY AFTER SURGERY AND LIGHTLY BRUSH AREA OF EXTRACTIONS TO KEEP FOOD OUT OF EXTRACTION SITE. RINSE BUT DO NOT FORCEFULLY SPIT. DO NOT USE HYDROGEN PEROXIDE, LISTERINE OR ANY TYPE OF MOUTHWASH FOR 2 WEEKS.**
- Drink plenty of liquids the first twenty-four (24) hours and eat soft foods such as jello, pudding, ice cream, and creamed soups. You may eat any foods once you feel comfortable.
- Do not smoke for ten (10) days after surgery.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages if taking pain medications.
- Apply ice to the face after surgery for three (3) full days and nights.
- You may remain numb up to eight or ten hours. Only take the pain medication if you are hurting severely. **Take pain medicine only when you have food in your stomach, or they will cause nausea and vomiting.**

Recovery times vary considerably with every individual. If there are no complications, then the recovery period is usually five to seven days. While you are under the influence of a sedative or pain medication, you cannot drive a car or operate machinery. Do not be alarmed if vision is blurred for a time after surgery.

1. BLEEDING

Some bleeding for up to five (5) days is normal. Bleeding may appear to be extensive when mixed with large amounts of saliva. Pressure to the bleeding site will stop bleeding. Keep steady pressure on the bleeding area by biting firmly on a gauze pad. Keep this pressure on for at least thirty (30) minutes without changing gauze. If clots the size of large cotton balls have formed, they must be removed with gauze and pressure then reapplied. A cold damp tea bag may also be used. Black, blue or yellowish marks (bruises) on the face are due to bleeding in the tissue. Gravity may cause these areas to move, but they will gradually disappear in 1-2 weeks.

DO NOT LEAVE GAUZE IN OVERNIGHT. NO SPITTING. NO SMOKING.

2. PAIN AND SWELLING

Pain varies from individual to individual. If pain is mild nature, try Tylenol. **If you need the medication prescribed by the doctor, do not take it on an empty stomach. It will cause nausea and vomiting.** Avoid all excessive activity and unnecessary talking. Do not pick at the surgical site. **Do not use tobacco (smoke or snuff) for at least ten (10) days.**



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PAIN AND SWELLING – Continued

AFTER SURGERY apply an ice bag over the affected area. Use ice on the area constantly for the first three (3) full days. **Heat and massage may be used after 3 days.** This will help minimize swelling, which also helps reduce pain. When lying down or sleeping, elevate head with two (2) pillows. Swelling inside the mouth will look like the cheek is sewn to the gums and cheek biting is common. Difficulty in opening the mouth widely and discomfort upon swallowing should be anticipated. A sore throat may develop after surgery. If sutures were used you may experience a drawing or tight feeling after a few days. This is normal, and most of the sutures used in our office are resorbable and will dissolve on their own in 7-14 days.

3. RINSING

DO NOT RINSE YOUR MOUTH THE DAY OF SURGERY. The day after surgery rinse your mouth gently every 3 to 4 hours (especially after meals) using ¼ teaspoon salt to one glass of warm water. Continue rinses for several weeks to cleanse surgical sites. **DO NOT USE HYDROGEN PEROXIDE, LISTERINE OR MOUTHWASH OF ANY KIND. BRUSH TEETH TWICE DAILY.**

4. FOOD

Fluid intake is very important. Drink plenty of liquids the first 24 hours (at least 8 glasses daily): soups, ice cream, jello, malts, juices, etc. **DO NOT USE A STRAW FOR 2 DAYS.** After the first 24 hours begin to eat soft nutritious foods and continue to drink plenty of liquids. A vitamin supplement will aid in healing and is recommended. You may eat anything, as you feel comfortable.

5. NAUSEA

Some nausea and vomiting may be a response to the sedative or pain medications, swallowed blood, or anxiety. Take one ounce of carbonated beverage such as ginger ale every hour for 5 or 6 hours, or a pinch of bicarbonate of soda in a glass of water. Then drink mild tea, clear broth, and soft foods before resuming your diet. Contact the office concerning persistent vomiting; additional medication may be required.

6. FEVER

Low-grade fever is normal. However, temperature recorded orally is not accurate after oral surgery. If a fever is suspected, take ear, arm or rectal reading. Any reading over 102 degrees should be reported.

7. BONY EDGES

During the healing period, small sharp bone fragments may work up through the gums. These are not roots or pieces of tooth. If they are bothersome, call our office and we will give you a time to come in and let the doctor check the area.

8. PARESTHESIA

Numbness of lips and/or tongue on the operated site may be experienced for a variable period of time. Surrounding teeth may feel mobile after surgery and all remaining teeth and other areas in the mouth, head, neck, and shoulder region may ache.

9. IV SEDATION

The intravenous sedation may cause soreness, redness, or knotty swelling in the wrist or arm. Moist heat, elevation of the affected area, and rest is necessary to relieve symptoms, but they can persist a month or longer.

Our office will do everything possible to answer your questions and help you during your recovery period. Call the office during office hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday and Friday 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.) and a member of our staff will be happy to assist you.

If you find yourself in a **TRUE EMERGENCY** after hours, please dial 931-0700 and after hearing our voice message please follow the instructions for paging for an emergency. If you have not heard back from our office in thirty (30) minutes repeat the steps for paging.

Non-emergency messages will be returned on the next business day.