

Home Care Instructions Following Oral Surgery (Dental Implants or Tooth Extraction)

Proper care of the mouth following most dental procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area.

1. **Protection of the blood clot...** Maintain gentle pressure by biting on the gauze sponge that has been placed over the surgical area. Keep steady firm pressure for 45 minutes. Repeat as often as needed. Be sure to moisten the gauze with a little water so that it won't stick to the clot.
2. **Do not rinse...** or use a mouthwash for at least 24 hours. After 24 hours, rinse with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon table salt in 8 oz. of warm water) every 1-2 hours is recommended. The use of commercial mouthwashes during the healing period is not advised due to the alcohol content.
3. **Discomfort...** Following **dental surgery** it is normal to experience some discomfort. (If medication has been given or prescribed, take as instructed. For mild to moderate pain, use any over the counter pain reliever you prefer.
4. **The toothbrush...** may be carefully used in the area of the mouth not involved by the surgical procedures. (A clean mouth heals faster.)
5. **Eating...** Adequate food and fluid intake following **dental surgery** is most important. For the first few days eat soft foods and try to take in as much fluid as possible. Try to limit chewing to side opposite the surgical site. If you find that eating your regular diet is too difficult, you may supplement your diet with liquids such as Carnation Instant Breakfast (CIB / any flavor). The high quality, nutritional value of CIB is important for prompt healing following such procedures.
6. **Avoid...** all excessive activity. Don't pick at the surgical area. Don't consume liquids through a straw. Avoid alcoholic beverages and refrain from smoking until healing is well established.
7. **Sutures...** If they were used, return for their removal on the appointment date given.
8. **Control swelling...** Gently apply ice packs to area for periods of 15 minutes on, 5 minutes off. This procedure should continue during the first 24 hours only.
9. Numbness (paresthesia) may persist around the lower lip on the same side as the operation. This is usually a temporary condition and will gradually disappear in a few days to several weeks as nerve tissue is repaired and regenerated.
10. Black and blue discoloration may occur on the outside of the face near the area of surgery. This is not unusual, and may take a week or more to resolve.
11. If the corners of your mouth are stretched, they may dry out and crack temporarily. Your lips should be kept moist with a cream or ointment such as Vaseline or Neosporin.
12. Your other teeth may ache temporarily. This is called sympathetic pain and is a temporary condition
13. **Medications...** Make sure you take your prescribed medications strictly following instructions. ***Women taking birth control medications should be aware that antibiotics can cause the birth control medications to be ineffective possibly resulting in pregnancy. Alternate methods should be used while on the antibiotics.***
14. **Allergic reactions...** for generalized rash, itching, or other reactions, call our office immediately. If we are not available at the time, go to the nearest hospital emergency room.
15. **Do not hesitate...** to call if any questions arise.