

GENERAL POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

Generally, patients tolerate routine oral surgery procedures with minimal problems. Adhering to the following guidelines will reduce the likelihood of post-surgical problems and will speed the healing process.

OVER THE NEXT 24-48 HOURS:

Soft foods:

- It is important to eat softer foods that barely need chewing. Milk shakes, smoothies, soup, yogurt, and applesauce are good examples of what type of consistency to eat. You may continue this over the next few days. Drink lots of water to stay hydrated and stay away from large amounts of caffeinated beverages while taking the medication to help prevent dehydration. Small amounts, such as a cup of coffee or tea, are acceptable.

Preventing a dry socket:

- A blood clot forms where the tooth was extracted to cover the exposed bone at the bottom of the socket. If this gets disturbed or removed entirely, it will cause a dry socket.
- To help prevent the extraction site from experiencing a dry socket, please follow these instructions over the next 24 hours:
 - NO drinking through a straw.
 - NO carbonated beverages.
 - NO heavy spitting into the sink until tomorrow but you may brush your teeth as normal that night.
- You could do everything right and still experience a dry socket. This usually occurs within the first week following surgery.

Controlling the bleeding

- Keep light pressure on the site by gently biting on the gauze we have given you for approximately one hour. If the gauze heavily saturates in blood over that time, replace with x2 pieces of gauze per site; lightly dampening them with warm water first. If you place dry gauze on the site, it will start to adhere to the gingival tissue. If the site continues to bleed past 1-2 hours, dampen a tea bag with warm water (doesn't matter what flavor), and gently bite down to keep pressure for exactly 10 minutes (it is best to set a timer!).
- When you go home and rest, make sure to keep your head elevated above your heart (it is important not to lay in a completely flat position). This will help decrease swelling and help to stop the bleeding.

Swelling/Bruising

- Directly after surgery, you may start to experience swelling. Use an ice pack for 20mins on and 20mins off on the outside of your cheek for the first 12 hours, making sure to wrap it first in a towel. You may continue this for the next couple of days if it helps make you feel better. You most likely will not experience bruising, but it is completely normal if you do and will go away in a few days.

Numbness

- You were given a local anesthetic at the time of your surgery. It may take a while to metabolize and for the feeling to come back in your jaws. Please pay close attention to your tongue and cheek so that you do not chew on them without realizing it. Avoid eating or drinking anything extremely hot as this may burn your mouth.

IV Anesthesia effects

- It is normal to experience some side effects of the anesthesia medication directly after surgery. These are normal and will go away relatively quickly: Blurred vision, short term memory loss, and shaking/shivering.

OVER THE NEXT 5-7 DAYS:

Jaw Pain

- You may experience some jaw pain following your surgery. This is normal and it will start to feel better in the next 5-7 days. Beginning on the 3rd day after surgery, apply heat for 15-20 minutes, and then stretch the jaw open for a few minutes. Repeat this 3-4 times daily.

Exercising

- Take it easy the next few days following surgery. Unless directed otherwise, please wait 3-5 days after surgery to begin a light exercise. You may increase the intensity over the course of the next week as you start to feel better. Stop if you feel over exerted.

Food

- Increase your diet as you start to feel more comfortable opening your mouth. It is important to stay away from anything with seeds, nuts, chips, and popcorn kernels until the site has fully healed. The bone surrounding the extraction site will be vulnerable over the next couple weeks, avoid crunching down or chewing on anything hard in that area. Doing so may damage the bone before it has had a chance to heal.

Irrigation Syringe

- If you were given an irrigation syringe, please start using it 5-7 days following surgery; directly after each time you eat. Please place the syringe tip into the socket site and irrigate with the mouth rinse that was prescribed or salt water. You may use tap water if that is all you have available at the moment. You will not damage the site by irrigating too hard. It may take a little over a month for the site to fully close, so continue to irrigate the site until you see or feel the site close. If you stop using the syringe before the site has fully healed, the tissue may grow over the impacted food and cause an infection.

OVER THE NEXT MONTH:

Sutures

- If sutures were placed, they are most likely resorbable and you will not need to come back to get them taken out. The body will slowly resorb them over the next 2-3 weeks. If they come out in the next couple days, you do not need to come back to get them put back in. Your doctor will let you know if the sutures placed are non-resorbable, and will schedule an appointment to return to the clinic to have them removed.

Membranes

- If a membrane was placed over the site, it is most likely resorbable and will come out on its own over the next 2-3 weeks. It may become discolored from the food you eat or from bleeding at the site. This is completely normal. If it comes out in the next couple days following surgery, this is also normal and you do not need to return to replace it. Your doctor will let you know if the membrane placed was non-resorbable, and will schedule an appointment to return to the clinic to routinely check or have it removed at a later date.

Bone Grafting

- If bone grafting was placed at the extraction site, you may feel little graft particles working their way out of the tissue. You most likely will not notice it, but may feel like you have a sand-like texture in your mouth. This is completely normal and does not mean the bone grafting is failing.

Please contact the office any time for the following problems:

- Uncontrolled bleeding or pain.
- Numbness from the local anesthetic lasting longer than 6 hours after surgery.
- Elevated temperature (>100.5 F).
- Swelling that begins or increases several days after surgery. (It starts to get better but then gets worse!)
- Inability to open mouth persisting beyond 7 days.
- Persistent irritation at the IV site.
- Any adverse reaction to taking your prescribed medications.
- A bad taste in your mouth that started several days following surgery.

*****PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO SEE YOUR POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS ON VIDEO*****

We are available to answer any questions during regular business hours, but if you have an emergent question after business hours, we do have an after-hours call service that will direct you with the on-call doctor. This is simply our office phone number (907) 222-5052. If you feel that you are having a life-threatening emergency, please call 911 for assistance.

Phone 907.222.5052 | Fax 907.222.5051

www.AlaskaOralFacialSurgery.com | info@AlaskaOralFacialSurgery.com 3909 Arctic Blvd. | Ste.404 | Anchorage | AK 99503