

WALTER K. MURPHY, D.D.S

ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

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Post-Operative Instructions for Patients Following Oral Surgical Procedures Under Sedation or General Anesthesia

- **Bleeding** - Leave gauze in place for 30 minutes after surgery, then remove. Replace with additional gauze every 30 minutes until the bleeding has stopped. Do not rinse the mouth with water. If bleeding persists, lightly wet a piece of gauze and place a moistened tea bag inside of it, then place over the surgical site and apply pressure for up to 30 minutes. It is normal for the saliva to be lightly streaked with blood for one to two days. If profuse or continuous bleeding persists, please contact the office.
- **Foods** – Eat cool or lukewarm, soft foods for the rest of the day following your surgery (Examples: ice cream, applesauce, yogurt, Jell-O, pudding, mashed potatoes, pasta, etc.). Do not eat anything steaming hot, as this will cause bleeding. Do not drink using a straw. After the first few days, you may gradually move up on the consistency of the diet. However, if your jaw starts to feel sore, you should switch back to softer foods for another couple of days.
- **Medications** – Take medications as prescribed. Following the removal of wisdom teeth, this will generally include an *antibiotic* and *ibuprofen (Motrin)*. These two medications are to be taken after the surgery (unless otherwise instructed by Dr. Murphy). Start them after the patient has eaten and continue to take them until gone. You may be given a prescription for a narcotic pain medication. Take the pain medication as needed, in addition to the ibuprofen, if the ibuprofen is not sufficient to control the discomfort. (Do not exceed one tablet every four hours). If you develop any problems while on the medications, please contact the office.

**Remember that the effectiveness of birth control pills is reduced while taking antibiotics.*

- **Swelling** – Apply ice to the facial region over the surgical area, 30 minutes on and then 30 minutes off continuously for 24-36 hours following your surgery. You do NOT need to do this throughout the entire night; apply on and off until bedtime and then resume upon waking the next morning. Post surgical swelling tends to peak on the third day and should then resolve over the next few days.
- **Hygiene** – Continue to brush your teeth with regular tooth paste, being careful to avoid the surgical site(s). Cleanliness of the mouth is important for healing and for preventing infections.

- **Two Days after Surgery** – If you were given an irrigation syringe, you may fill the syringe with plain tap water and begin gentle rinsing of your mouth after meals and several times a day. If you did not receive this syringe, and you wish to start rinsing your mouth, you may do so by gently swishing with plain tap water.
- **Pain** – Occasionally, a sharp pain will develop 3-5 days after surgery. This is usually caused when the blood clot dislodges and the bone is exposed. This is called a “dry socket”. Please call the office for treatment if this should occur.
- **Rest** – It is not necessary to go to bed, but rest is important for the first 24 hours following general anesthesia. You may experience light-headedness, dizziness, or sleepiness following surgery. We suggest that a responsible adult be with you the day of surgery and during that first night.
- **If you experience difficulty** – If you have difficulty with breathing, if you have bleeding that you feel is excessive, if you have persistent nausea or vomiting, if you have unusual pain, or if you have a fever of 101 degrees or higher, please contact Dr. Murphy during office hours at (804) 746-1864 or after hours through Doctors Exchange (an after-hours answering service) at (804) 228-6396.

First 24 hours – DO NOT do the following:

- Drink alcoholic beverages. Alcohol increases the effect of anesthesia.
- Drive a motor vehicle, operate machinery or power tools.
- Make important decisions or sign important papers.
- Smoke or use any smokeless tobacco products.