

Post-operative instructions -

Taking Care of Yourself after Oral Surgery

The following is our recommended care advice following surgical procedures for patients receiving bone grafts, sinus lift procedures or implant placement surgery. The purpose of these instructions is to allow for proper healing of the surgical site and to keep swelling and discomfort to a minimum.

Local anaesthesia

A local anaesthetic results in numbness of in and around your mouth. This numbness should wear off within a couple of hours. Please be very careful not to drink hot fluids as this may cause burning. Also be very careful not to bite your lips, cheeks or tongue.

Swelling and Pain Control

After the operation you may experience some discomfort, swelling, and jaw stiffness. You can help to reduce the swelling by applying an ice pack to the area. Apply the ice pack with firm constant pressure for 10 - 20 minutes, and then release the pressure for five minutes. This allows the skin area to warm up. Repeat this routine for the next 2-4 hours. Do not use ice packs after the first 24 hours.

Also prop yourself up with a couple of pillows when watching TV and while sleeping for the first 2 to 48 hours after surgery. Most pain and jaw aching starts when feeling returns to your mouth and the numbness wears off. Start taking pain-relieving medicines (e.g. Ibuprofen) when you get home while you are still "numb." Do not exceed the maximum stated dose. Please note that moderate swelling post-operatively is a normal reaction, and often is maximal on the third day following surgery.

Bleeding

Following surgery a sterile gauze pack will be placed over the operation site. Steady, light pressure should be applied for 30 minutes. This allows for a blood clot to form. Some oozing of blood during the first 24-48 hours is normal. If you notice bleeding from the surgical site apply a wet gauze compress to the spot that is bleeding and apply light pressure for about 45-60 minutes. Repeat if necessary.

Strenuous exercise should be avoided as this may encourage bleeding. Excessive mouth rinsing will disrupt the clotting mechanism and bleeding may continue.

Wound Care

Please do not disturb the wound or pull on any sutures. In doing so you may invite irritation, infection, and / or further bleeding.

Smoking

We advise that smoking may delay or affect healing following surgery and increase the risk of failure of implants or grafts.

Alcohol and Diet

We also advise that alcohol should only be consumed in very moderate amounts during the healing phase.

A soft diet is recommended for the first 10 days following surgery. After each meal, the mouth should be gently rinsed with warm saline solution (1/2 teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water) or mouthwash containing chlorhexidine (available at the practice). Do not use a drinking straw, especially after sinus surgery.

Brushing and Cleaning

Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible avoiding the areas that are healing. Soreness and swelling may not permit effective brushing of all areas. Avoid brushing vigorously around any sutures.

Antibiotics and Medications

Please take these as directed.

Complications

If you experience prolonged numbness, prolonged pain or prolonged bleeding, please contact the surgery.