

# Suburban Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Associates PC

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## Post - Operative Instructions After Teeth Removal

These instructions will help you minimize the chance of developing the post-operative complications that were discussed with you before your surgery. It is normal to develop one or more of the following symptoms after your surgery. You may have bleeding from the operative site(s) for 24 hours or more after your surgery. You will have discomfort, bruising and swelling around the site(s) and face, which will slowly get worse for the **next 2 or 3 days** to a maximum before starting to go away for several more days. You may apply ice to your face for 30 minutes per site, switching side to side today and tomorrow while you are awake. This may help to reduce the amount of swelling from your surgery.

If gauze was placed, keep it in the same place biting down with steady pressure on the gauze for at least **one hour**. This helps form a blood clot and decreases the bleeding. Avoid chewing the gauze or talking during this time, since these jaw movements will loosen the clot(s) making the operative site(s) bleed much more. After one hour, remove the gauze and leave it out for a few minutes. If bleeding starts again, place another piece of moist gauze at the same place and bite down firmly for another **45 - 60** minutes without checking the area. If bleeding still occurs, moisten 1 or 2 tea bags with warm water, squeeze the excess water from the tea bag(s) and place the tea bag(s) at the operative site(s) while biting firmly for another **45 - 60** minutes without checking the area. This should help form a blood clot and stop the bleeding. It is very normal to expect mild oozing to continue for up to 24 hours. If you still have a lot of bleeding after 24 hours, please call for further instructions. The stitches usually dissolve away in 3-10 days or more unless you are told otherwise.

Please do not rinse, swish, gargle or spit from your mouth for at least **24 hours**. These activities will loosen the new and fragile blood clot(s) and will cause fresh bleeding. You should start to gently rinse your mouth starting **tomorrow**. Take a glass of warm water, add a pinch of salt and rinse your mouth with this mixture several times a day, especially after meals. Avoid mouthwash for several days, as it will irritate or sting the fresh sockets. You can start your normal oral hygiene **tomorrow**, i.e. tooth brushing, flossing, etc. Do not disturb the surgical site(s) for several days.

The most common problem after surgery is dry socket. It happens 4-7 days after your surgery, and you will need to return to our office for treatment. A dry socket will cause throbbing / radiating jaw pain and earache along with a bad taste in your mouth on the affected side. Healing will stop and pain will keep getting worse until you call the office to get treatment. **Do not smoke at all** for several days after your surgery. Smoke is a strong irritant, and the suction effect of smoking will remove the blood clot(s) at the extraction site(s), causing a dry socket. If you smoke, you have at least a 50% chance of causing a dry socket.

You are allowed to eat and drink today after you remove the gauze and bleeding is controlled. Start with clear liquids like water, apple or white grape juice or Gatorade. Avoid carbonated drinks or milk products, since they can nauseate you until your stomach settles from the surgery. Afterwards, soft foods like oatmeal, jello, mashed potatoes or scrambled eggs can be eaten today. **Do not use straws** for drinking, which will suck out the blood clot(s) and cause new bleeding. Eating hard, crunchy, hot, acidic or spicy foods will irritate or even open up the surgery site(s). You may advance your diet over the next few days to more regular foods as healing continues and you become more comfortable.

If provided, fill your prescription(s) on your way home. Antibiotics must be started **as soon as possible** to decrease the chance of an infection. For females taking birth control pills, Depo-Provera, Implanon, Ortho Evra or Nuva Ring, be aware that their contraceptive effect is decreased for up to 2 weeks after completion of the antibiotic prescription. Pain medication should be started before the local anesthesia (Novocaine) wears off, which is usually 1-4 hours after surgery. Avoid driving a vehicle or operating heavy machinery while taking a narcotic pain medication, if prescribed. If the pain is minor, try over-the-counter medication like Tylenol, Advil / Nuprin (Ibuprofen), Aleve as needed instead of the narcotic prescription. If the pain is moderate to severe, take Advil / Nuprin (Ibuprofen) or Aleve, but **not** Tylenol, along with the narcotic prescription for enhanced pain relief and help with swelling.

**If you have any problems or questions, call (716) 631-2800 24 hours/7 days a week. A live person will speak to you after a recorded message. State your procedure, problem and date of surgery, and your doctor will call you back shortly. Before going to an E.R. for any treatment, please call and speak to your surgeon first.**