



DR. JENNA D. GODWIN
ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

Post-Operative Instructions

- **BLEEDING:** Bite down firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical sites, making sure the gauze remains in place. You may remove the gauze after 20-30 minutes if the bleeding is controlled. If active bleeding persists, you may place a new piece of gauze at the site, replacing every 30 minutes as needed. It is normal to have slight oozing at the area for 24 hours after surgery, especially if you take a blood-thinning medication or certain supplements. ***PLEASE DO NOT EAT OR SLEEP WITH GAUZE IN YOUR MOUTH, AS IT IS A CHOKING HAZARD*** A black tea bag may be dampened and placed directly on the area if needed to control bleeding. If your bleeding is profuse, persistent, and uncontrollable, please call our office.
- **HYGIENE:** Please DO NOT rinse vigorously on the first day. You may gently brush the teeth that are not directly adjacent to the surgical site and rinse with room-temperature water or salt water. If you were prescribed an antimicrobial mouthrinse, you may begin using it three days after your surgery. Please DO NOT use hydrogen peroxide or alcohol-based mouthrinses after surgery. If you were given a syringe, you may begin using it on day three. A small socket will be present at the area where the surgery was performed. Place the tip of the syringe in the socket and gently rinse any food or debris from the socket.
- **DO NOT SMOKE OR VAPE** for at least 48 hours, and ideally one week after surgery. Smoking/vaping is very detrimental to healing and can lead to dry sockets.
- **SWELLING:** Swelling is a normal part of the recovery process. The third day following surgery is often the worst day for swelling, usually following removal of wisdom teeth. For the first day, you may use ice packs on the cheeks alternating on and off every 20 minutes. After 24 hours, moist heat is best to help reduce any residual swelling. If you can take Ibuprofen (ex: Motrin, Advil), this is an excellent anti-inflammatory medication and will help with pain as well. If you are unsure if you can take Ibuprofen, please talk to your doctor first.
- **PAIN:** Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. Post-operative pain is easier to manage if you stay ahead of it. If you take your medication(s) as soon as possible following your surgery before the local anesthetic has worn off, you will likely have an easier time managing your discomfort. Please continue to schedule Ibuprofen and/or Tylenol every 8 hours for

the first 1-2 days following surgery. Post-op discomfort is usually worst in the first few days following surgery and should lessen with time.

- **DIET:** Following IV anesthesia, start with clear liquids and work up to soft solids as your stomach allows. To ensure proper healing of surgical sites, soft foods which do not require excessive chewing are ideal. Some examples are: ice cream, mashed potatoes, bananas, scrambled eggs, soup, pudding, Jell-O. Milkshakes and protein shakes are great options but please make sure you do NOT use a straw for at least one week to avoid putting excessive pressure on your surgical sites.
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:** You may NOT operate a vehicle or heavy machinery while taking narcotic pain medicine or for 24 hours following IV anesthesia. We recommend no strenuous physical activity for at least one week postoperatively. Not doing so can disrupt the clotting and healing process and can lead to delayed wound healing or a dry socket.
- **NAUSEA:** Nausea is sometimes common following IV anesthesia and can also be caused by taking narcotic pain medicines (eg. Hydrocodone, Tramadol). You can lessen nausea after IV anesthesia by taking over the counter antihistamines such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl) as needed. If your nausea/vomiting is persistent, please call the office.
- **SUTURES/STITCHES:** Your surgeon may have placed sutures in the gum tissue. The sutures placed are dissolvable and will fall out on their own in 5-7 days following surgery. Please do not be alarmed if they fall out prior to that time frame, as this likely means that your wound is healing quickly and they are no longer needed.
- **DRY SOCKET:** Following the third day, your pain and swelling should significantly decrease. There should be gradual, steady improvement for the remainder of your recovery period. Usually by 2 weeks, the sites will be healed enough to not be noticeable. Every person and every surgery is unique. If a **DRY SOCKET** occurs, there is a notable, persistent pain in the jaw that often radiates toward the ear. This usually occurs beginning near the end of the first week. Dry sockets are very rare before the fifth day postoperatively. If you do not see steady improvement during the first week after surgery, please call our office to schedule a follow up appointment. We are here for you!