

Langley Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Certified Specialist in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Phone: 604-371-0578

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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

*****PLEASE READ ALL OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY*****

Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of the instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification. Office number is 604-371-0578. Dr. Kang's cell phone is 778-896-1838.

DAY OF SURGERY

FIRST HOUR: Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them for the first half hour unless the bleeding is not controlled. The packs may be gently removed after half an hour. If active bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes. The gauze may then be changed as necessary (typically every 30 to 45 minutes). It is best to moisten the gauze with tap water and loosely fluff for more comfortable positioning.

EXERCISE CARE: Do not disturb the surgical area at all. **Do NOT** rinse vigorously, spit, or drink through a straw for at least three days. Do not probe the area with any objects at all. Do not use any type of mouthwash. You may brush your teeth gently and gently let the water pour out of your mouth. Do not spit.

PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE for at least 72 hours, since this is very detrimental to healing and may cause a dry socket.

OOZING: Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal for the first three days. Bleeding may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the areas and biting on the gauze for 30-45 minutes at a time.

PERSISTENT BLEEDING: Bleeding should never be severe. If so, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between teeth only and are not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may **substitute a tea bag** (soaked in warm water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in a moist gauze) for 20 or 30 minutes. **If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.**

SWELLING: Swelling is often associated with oral surgery and it is the worse on the third post-op day. It can be minimized by using a cold pack, ice bag or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the first 72 hours after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed.

PAIN: Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication. **If you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you should be able to manage any discomfort better.** Some patients find that stronger pain medicine causes nausea, but if you precede each pain pill with a small amount of food, chances for nausea will be reduced. The effects of pain medications vary widely among individuals. If you do not achieve adequate relief at first, you may supplement each pain pill with an analgesic such as ibuprofen. Some patients may even require two of the pain pills at one time. Remember that the most severe pain is usually within six hours after the local anesthetic wears off. Pain should start to taper off after the third post-op day. After that your need for medicine should lessen. **If you find you are taking large amounts of pain medicine at frequent intervals, please call our office. If you anticipate needing more prescription medication for the weekend, you must call for a refill during weekday business hours.**

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Prescription example:

Ibuprofen 400mg every 6 hours with food for the first two days – with or without pain. This will decrease the amount of post-op swelling. If you still experience pain within the 6 hour window, you can take extra strength Tylenol or Tylenol III.

NAUSEA: Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food, and taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications, but call us if you do not feel better

DIET: Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Avoid extremely hot foods. Do not use a straw for the first few days after surgery. It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.) It is best to avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you may gradually progress to solid foods. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

SHARP EDGES: If you feel something hard or sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling the bony walls which once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

SUTURES: Sutures may come loose or fall off during the initial healing process. Please do not be alarmed when it happens.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

MOUTH RINSES: You do not need to rinse or gargle your mouth for the first week. The doctor will rinse out the surgical site on your one-week follow-up appointment.

BRUSHING: Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

HEALING: Normal healing after tooth extraction should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually some swelling. On the third day you should be more comfortable and, although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. **The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual, steady improvement.** If you don't see continued improvement, please call our office. If you are given a plastic irrigating syringe, **DO NOT** use it for the first five days. Then use it daily according to the instructions until you are certain the tooth socket has closed completely and that there is no chance of any food particles lodging in the socket.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office at 604-371-0578. You may contact Dr. Kang at 778-896-1838 after hours, if the matter is urgent. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern. **PLEASE NOTE: telephone calls for narcotic (pain killer) prescription renewal are ONLY accepted during office hours.**