



POST OPERATIVE - INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS

Instructions After Surgery

Please read and follow these instructions carefully, since post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed. The after-effects of surgery vary per individual, so not all of the information may apply. Please feel free to contact us at anytime should you have any questions or concerns.

Immediately Following Surgery

You will awaken to numb lips and teeth due to the residual effects of the local anesthetic ("Novocaine"). The numbness should last approximately two hours. You will also be biting on a moist piece of gauze over the extraction sites.

1. Emotional behavior and crying immediately after awakening is very common. Please do not be alarmed. This normal side effect of anesthesia is only temporary and has no long lasting effects.
2. Remove the gauze in 30 minutes. If oozing continues, then replace it with a fresh gauze for an additional 30 minutes. There should be constant, firm pressure at the extraction sites.
3. When the bleeding has been controlled, you should attempt to drink some full liquids (without using straws), such as milkshakes, smoothies, pudding or applesauce.
4. If you are able to tolerate liquids in your stomach, you should take the Ibuprofen prescribed to you by your doctor as soon as you are able. This is prescription strength and much stronger than the Ibuprofen or Advil you get from the pharmacy. You should take only ONE at a time and NO MORE THAN FOUR PER DAY. It should be taken around the clock every six hours for the first 48 hours after surgery. It will provide good baseline pain relief without the side effects of the narcotics.
5. Do not take the narcotic pain medication, Vicodin or Percocet, until 4-6 hours after the surgery. Nausea and vomiting is a very common side effect of the general anesthetic and narcotic prescription pain medicines, especially when taken on an empty stomach. Be very careful with your first dose. Make sure you have some thick liquids in your stomach, and if you are particularly sensitive, take half a tablet for your first dose. Taking the narcotic medication is not required. Thus, if you don't need it, you don't have to take it.
6. Apply ice packs to your face for 20 minutes every 2 hours for the next 24 hours. Keep your head elevated at all times to decrease the pressure in your head and jaws.

7. Remember to keep hydrated and drink plenty of liquids to help with the healing process. However, you should not use a straw and avoid carbonated beverages during the recovery period.
8. **DO NOT SMOKE.** The irritants in the cigarette smoke will greatly increase your chance of prolonged pain and complications. The risk is highest in the first week, therefore, you should not smoke for at least ten days.
9. Some bleeding and oozing is very common over the next 24 – 48 hours. If the wound is actively bleeding, apply a rolled up gauze over the extraction site and firmly bite down for 30 minutes. Be sure that the gauze is putting pressure directly over the gum tissue where the bleeding is occurring. **THERE SHOULD BE NO VIGOROUS RINSING OR SPITTING WHEN ACTIVELY BLEEDING**, as this will make it worse. If bleeding persists, you may use a moistened tea bag directly over the extraction site and apply firm biting pressure for 30 minutes.
10. Unless otherwise stated, most stitches are dissolvable. They will last in the wound between 2-7 days. Dissolution of the sutures within this time period is normal and need not be replaced.
9. You should consume only nonsolid foods for the first 2-3 days. Some recommendations are:

Ice cream	Pudding
Yogurt	Jell-O
Soups	Mashed potatoes
Scrambled eggs	Sorbet
Popsicles	Milkshakes (without straws)

Please avoid carbonated beverages for the first three days following surgery.

Please avoid nuts, seeds, popcorn and chips for the first week of surgery.

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POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - continued

Next 2-3 Days After Surgery

1. Your face and cheeks could become dramatically swollen in the next 48 hours. Your doctor has given you medicines during the surgery that minimizes the swelling, but it cannot be completely eliminated. The swelling should reach its peak by the second day after surgery.
2. Bruising and skin discolorations are not unusual. The discolorations can be yellow or black and blue, depending on the fairness of your skin, and is usually limited to the neck or cheek area near the surgical site. This is caused by bleeding through the mucous membranes of the mouth beneath the skin. It often takes a week for this to completely disappear
3. You should be able to brush your teeth by the third day. Brush normally in areas away from the surgical site, but avoid brushing directly on the wound. Good hygiene will minimize the bacteria in your mouth, decreasing your chance of an infection.
4. By the third day following the surgery, you should use warm salt water rinses 2-3 times a day after eating to keep debris from accumulating at the surgical site. Use one-half teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and gently rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat as often as you like, but at least two or three times daily and always after eating for the next 7 days.
5. You should avoid any strenuous work or vigorous exercise for 5-7 days.

6. If you were prescribed an antibiotic and are currently taking oral contraceptives, you should use an alternate method of birth control for the remainder of this cycle.
7. By the third or fourth day, you should be able to advance to a soft diet, consisting of minimal chewing, such as soft pasta, macaroni and cheese, pancakes, etc. Avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds or popcorn, which may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days, you may progress to more solid foods
8. Numbness of the lower lip and chin is a potential complication of extracting lower teeth, especially wisdom teeth. If you experience these symptoms one week after surgery, please contact our office. The injury is usually temporary, but full recovery can take up to six months.

One Week After Surgery

1. If you have continuing pain, swelling, fever and a bad taste in your mouth, it is possible that you have an infection at the extraction sites. If you experience these symptoms a week after the surgery, please contact our office for a visit.
2. A dry socket is a condition in which the blood clot that has formed in the extraction socket has either dislodged or dissolved. It is a very painful condition along the surgical site which occurs 5-7 days following the extraction, often radiating toward the ear and forward along the jaw which may cause other teeth to ache. Fortunately, it is a self-limiting process and with adequate pain control, resolves itself in 24 - 48 hours.

Special Instructions for Sinus Exposures

Upper teeth near the back of the upper jaw are usually very close to the maxillary sinus, which are air-filled cavities beneath your eyes and behind your cheekbones. A frequent complication of removing upper molar (back) teeth is exposure of the sinus floor. Most exposures will heal spontaneously or with minimal intervention as long as the following instructions are strictly adhered to after the surgery:

- Some intermittent nose bleeding from the side of the surgery is a normal occurrence. Please do not be alarmed.
- Do NOT blow your nose vigorously for two weeks. There is a natural communication between your nose and sinus. Any positive pressure in your nose will be directly transferred to the sinus and subsequently to the fresh extraction site. If you feel “stuffed up”, decongestants such as Drixoral, Dimetapp, or Sudafed will help reduce pressure in the sinuses.
- Please keep your tongue away from the fresh surgical site. As the swelling subsides, the stitches might feel like they are loosening up. Please do not cut them prematurely.
- Do NOT use straws for two weeks. The negative pressure generated from the straw will lead to breakdown to the fresh extraction site.
- Do NOT smoke for two to three weeks. Smoking has a much more profound influence on oral wounds than any other part of the body, since the effect of the smoke is directly in contact with the healing wound. Wound breakdown and poor healing is ten times more prevalent in smokers than nonsmokers.
- When sneezing, please do so with your mouth open, and do not sneeze holding your nose. The generated pressure must be released without transmitting to your sinuses.
- Anything that causes pressure in your nasal cavity must be avoided. Avoid “bearing down”—as when lifting heavy objects, blowing up balloons, playing musical instruments that require a blowing action or any other activity that increases nasal or oral pressure. Scuba diving and flying in pressurized aircraft may also increase sinus pressure and should be avoided.
- Failure to adhere to these instructions could result in a permanent communication (fistula) between your mouth and your sinus. This would require an additional highly invasive surgery that would incur further cost and recovery time. Prevention is always the most prudent option.

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POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - continued

Special Instructions After Exposure of an Impacted Tooth

Do not disturb the wound. If surgical packing was placed, leave it alone. The pack helps to keep the tooth exposed. If it gets dislodged or falls out, do not be alarmed.

Depending on the surgery, you might have a bonded gold chain attached to your braces with a suture or an elastic band. This

chain is a handle for your orthodontist to move the impacted tooth to the desired position. Please do not touch the chain, as the attachment may loosen.

You should be able to see your orthodontist after one week to activate the chain and start moving the impacted tooth.

Special Instructions After Removal Of Multiple Teeth and Insertion of Dentures

Leave your denture in place for 24 hours. This will help with clot formation and minimize bleeding.

Frequently, the dentures will feel very loose. This is intentional to account for the swelling that might develop in the first 72 hours. Please refrain from using any adhesives or denture paste in the region of the fresh wounds until they are fully healed.

You will develop sore spots and ulceration where the dentures are contacting the gums. These are normal occurrences and should improve with time, as long as you see your dentist for regular adjustments.

You must see your dentist within the first 72 hours after surgery and make the necessary adjustments to relieve the sore

spots. Failure to do so may result in severe denture sores, which may prolong the healing process.

After the first week, you should routinely leave the dentures out at night. Wearing the dentures excessively can cause a superficial fungal infection and inflammation due to the chronic pressure.

Your dentures are only cosmetic for the first 4-6 weeks. It will take you this long for you to become comfortable with your dentures. Please be patient, since most people have a long adjustment period to their dentures. This is especially true for lower dentures.

Special Instructions After Implants or Grafting Procedures

Additional instructions apply for any implants or bone/soft tissue grafting procedures. Frequently, the stitches for these procedures are NOT dissolvable. We need additional time for the wound to heal to protect the underlying implant or graft. The stitches will need to remain in wound for up to four weeks. During this period:

- PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB THE WOUND AND SUTURES. It will be a natural tendency for your tongue to touch and play with the sutures. This will cause early wound breakdown and exposure of the implant or graft, resulting in a higher failure rate.
- Keep all chewing limited to the opposite side or on non-operated areas of the mouth.
- Do not brush over the fresh wound for at least two weeks. Following the second day, gentle rinsing is allowed but not too vigorously.

- As the swelling subsides, it might feel like the stitches are loosening up. Please do NOT cut them.
- Partial dentures or flippers should not be used immediately after surgery until your post-operative appointment unless specifically instructed otherwise. Even when worn, they should be utilized as little as possible during the first two weeks of the healing period. When it is placed it should not touch the gums in the area of the surgery. If it does, this can cause ulceration of the wound edges and breakdown of the suture margins. This can lead to failure of the graft or implant. When you are at home and not in public, please take them out.
- Depending on the site and bone quality, your doctor sometimes attaches a temporary tooth to the implant. This tooth is for esthetics only and should NOT be used for chewing or function until the implant is fully healed (~3 months).

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. If you have any questions about your progress or any symptoms you are experiencing, please call our Marysville office at 360.653.1114 or our Everett office at 425.356.3000. After office hours, you may call one of our doctors directly at the following number:

Dr. Jae Hong • 206.234.4044

Dr. Garry Gill • 425.388.6900

Dr. Randy Bogard • 425.388.6901