

Instructions for Postoperative Care

1. Keep the gauze in your mouth with firm, stable pressure for 1½ to 2 hours after you arrive home. After 1½ to 2 hours, the gauze can be removed slowly and gently.
2. Swelling after surgery is normal and typically peaks 3 to 4 days after your procedure. To reduce swelling, ice packs are to be placed over the surgical site -- 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off -- for two days following surgery.
3. Our goal is to maintain the clot that is forming in your extraction sites and prevent dislodgement by:
 - A. Avoid spitting – this will disrupt the clot
 - B. Do not vigorously rinse out mouth for 2 days following your procedure
 - C. Do not use a straw for 2 days following your procedure

I know, way too many “avoids” and “do nots”. Keep in mind this is for a short time after your procedure and is to help you get back to your normal self as soon as possible
4. There will be oozing from the surgical site up to 5 days after surgery. If you have any concerns of further oozing, immediately place firm pressure over the sites with gauze. Black tea bags (such as Lipton) can be placed along with the gauze. The tannins in the tea help with clotting. A small amount of bleeding may also occur with vigorous exercise up to 2 weeks after surgery.
5. Most discomfort will occur between for 3-4 days following surgery. Take medication for pain and discomfort as needed. Often it is important during the first 2-3 days to "stay ahead of the pain" by taking the pain medications before acute pain sets in. After the immediate post-operative period (2-3 days) pain medications should be taken only when needed. Any pain medication can upset the stomach and taking with food often helps. You should not drive or operate machinery after taking the pain medications.
6. Antibiotics, if given, should be taken until finished and on the schedule prescribed.
7. Keep your head elevated approximately 30 degrees with pillows. If you sleep on the side on which you had the surgery, the site may become more swollen. A towel over your pillow may be used to catch small amount of bleeding expected after surgery.
8. After IV medications and surgery, you should not operate bicycles, skateboards or skates; any type of motorized vehicles; or any machinery for 24 hours.

Instructions for Postoperative Care (continued)

9. A soft diet may be required. (Nourishing foods that can be taken with comfort include yogurts, puddings, milkshakes, soups, eggs and cottage cheese.) Limited opening of the mouth can be expected between one to three weeks after a procedure. It is important to refrain from hard, crunchy foods (including popcorn, chips, pretzels and nuts), which may harm the surgical site. Avoid extremely hot foods, but you can eat ice cream and frozen yogurt. If you are diabetic, maintain as close to your normal eating habits as possible or follow the instructions given by your doctor.
10. Cleaning of the mouth can begin soon after surgery. For the 1st two postoperative days do not brush over the surgical site. After two days very gentle brushing with a soft toothbrush may be resumed.
11. After surgery, you should not smoke for a minimum of seven days. Smoking can cause damage to the healing site (specifically, breakdown of the clot in the surgical site).
12. Sutures, if any have been placed, may dissolve or may be removed at the next follow-up appointment.
13. After IV (sleep) medications, do not walk around without assistance. You should also only go up and down stairs with assistance. Use a seat belt at all times when you're seated in a motor vehicle.
14. If you have any questions or problems, please do not hesitate to call the office
Truckee: 530-587-5440 South Lake Tahoe: 530-541-4042 and many concerns can be addressed by going to our website: TahoeOralSurgery.com