



*Dentistry Dedicated
to Excellence*

Wisdom Tooth Extraction Post-operative Instructions

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SURGERY

- The gauze pad placed over the surgical area should be kept in place for a half hour. After this time, the gauze pad should be removed and discarded.
- Vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the wound area following surgery should be avoided. This may initiate bleeding by causing the blood clot that has formed to become dislodged.
- Take the prescribed pain medications as soon as you begin to feel discomfort this will usually coincide with the local anesthetic becoming diminished.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable.
- Place ice packs to the sides of your face where surgery was performed. Refer to the section on swelling for explanation.

BLEEDING

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon. Excessive bleeding may be controlled by first rinsing or wiping any old clots from your mouth, then placing a gauze pad over the area and biting firmly for thirty minutes. Repeat if necessary. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for thirty minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels. To minimize further bleeding, do not become excited, sit upright, and avoid exercise. If bleeding does not subside, call for further instructions.

SWELLING

The swelling that is normally expected is usually proportional to the surgery involved. Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes and sides of the face is not uncommon. This is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual repair. The swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until 2-3 days post-operatively. However, the swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Two baggies filled with ice, or ice packs should be applied to the sides of the face where surgery was performed. Re-usable ice bags are available for sale for your convenience at the time of your procedure. The ice packs should be left on continuously while you are

awake. After 36 hours, ice has no beneficial effect. If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. This is a normal reaction to surgery. Thirty-six hours following surgery the application of moist heat to the sides of the face is beneficial in reducing the size of the swelling.

PAIN

For moderate pain, Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) 2-4 of the 200 mg tablets may be taken every 6 hours.

For severe pain take the tablets prescribed for pain as directed. The prescribed pain medicine will make you groggy and will slow down your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Pain or discomfort following surgery should subside more and more every day. If pain persists, it may require attention and you should call the office.

DIET

After general anesthetic or I.V. sedation, liquids should be taken at first. Do not use straws. Drink from a glass. The sucking motion can cause more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot. You may eat anything soft by chewing away from the surgical sites. High calorie, high protein intake is very important. Nourishment should be taken regularly. You should prevent dehydration by taking fluids regularly. Your food intake will be limited for the first few days. You should compensate for this by increasing your fluid intake. At least 5-6 glasses of liquid should be taken daily. Try not to miss a single meal. You will feel better, have more strength, less discomfort and heal faster if you continue to eat. Caution: If you suddenly sit up or stand from a lying position you may become dizzy. Therefore, immediately following surgery, if you are lying down, make sure you sit for one minute before standing.

KEEP THE MOUTH CLEAN

No rinsing of any kind should be done until the day following surgery. You can brush your teeth the night of surgery but rinse gently. The day after surgery you should begin rinsing at least 5-6 times a day especially after eating with a cup of warm water mixed with a teaspoon of salt. Rinse gently without force. Gently let the solution roll out of your mouth. Do not spit forcefully. **REMEMBER: A CLEAN WOUND HEALS BETTER AND FASTER.**

DISCOLORATION

In some cases, discoloration of the skin follows swelling. The development of black, blue, green, or yellow discoloration is due to blood spreading beneath the tissues. This is a normal post-operative

occurrence, which may occur 2-3 days post-operatively. Moist heat applied to the area may speed up the removal of the discoloration.

ANTIBIOTICS

If you have been placed on antibiotics take the tablets or liquid as directed. Antibiotics are not routinely prescribed for routine oral surgery. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction. Call the office if you have any questions.

NAUSEA AND VOMITING

In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, do not take anything by mouth for at least an hour including the prescribed medicine. You should then sip on coke, tea or ginger ale. You should sip slowly over a fifteen-minute period. When the nausea subsides you can begin taking solid foods and the prescribed medicine. If your nausea and/or vomiting persist and is intolerable contact the office.

OTHER COMPLICATIONS

- If numbness of the lip, chin, or tongue occurs there is no cause for alarm. As stated before surgery, this is usually temporary in nature. You should be aware that if your lip or tongue is numb you could bite it and not feel it so be careful. Call Dr Walker if you have any questions about this, or if the numbness persist for longer than one week.
- If you notice air or fluid leak from your mouth to your nose, you may have a communication from your mouth to your sinus. Start taking decongestants and notify our office to be seen. Also do not drink from a straw or forcefully sneeze.
- Slight elevation of temperature immediately following surgery is not uncommon. If the temperature persists, notify the office. Tylenol or ibuprofen should be taken to reduce the fever.
- You should be careful going from the lying down position to standing. As you were not able to eat or drink prior to surgery, and it is difficult to take fluids, and taking pain medications can make you dizzy. You could get light headed when you stand up suddenly. Before standing up, you should sit for one minute then get up.
- Occasionally, patients may feel hard projections in the mouth with their tongue. They are not roots, they are the bony walls which supported the tooth. These projections usually smooth out spontaneously. If not, they can be removed by Dr. Walker.
- If the corners of your mouth are stretched, they may dry out and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with an ointment such as Vaseline.
- Sore throats and pain when swallowing are not uncommon. The muscles get swollen. The normal act of swallowing can then become painful. This will subside in 2-3 days.
- Stiffness (Trismus) of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening your mouth for a few days following surgery. This is a normal post-operative event which will resolve in time.

FINALLY

- Sutures may be placed in the area of surgery to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. Sometimes they become dislodged, this is no cause for alarm. Just remove the suture from your mouth and discard it. The sutures are often resorbable.
- The pain and swelling should subside more and more each day following surgery. If your post-operative pain or swelling worsens or unusual symptoms occur call my office for instructions.
- There may be a cavity where the tooth was removed. The cavity will gradually over the next month fill in with the new tissue. In the mean time, the area should be kept clean especially after meals with salt water rinses or a toothbrush.
- Your case is individual, no two mouths are alike. Do not take seriously well intended advice from friends. Discuss your problem with the persons best able to effectively help you: Meridian Dental Clinic.
- Brushing your teeth is okay - just be very gentle at the surgical sites.
- If you are involved in regular exercise be aware that your normal nourishment intake is reduced exercise may weaken you. If you get light headed stop exercising.

General Dental Post-operative Instructions

- Use ice packs for 24 hrs to minimize swelling. Alternate off and on every 20 minutes.
- Eat soft foods and maintain adequate daily fluid intake.
- Avoid hot food, carbonated or alcoholic beverages, and smoking for 3 days.
- Avoid the use of straws, vigorous swishing, and spitting for 3 days.
- Beginning the day after surgery, gently rinse with warm salt water. 1/4 teaspoon salt to 6 ounces of Water.
- Keep your head elevated on 2-3 pillows for 24 hours after surgery to minimize swelling.
- If you were given a cleaning syringe, begin using it 5 days after your surgery in lower sites only. Use warm salt water in the syringe on the lower sockets three times a day until your gums heal.
- If you had IV Sedation or General Anesthesia, a responsible adult is to remain with you for 24 hours. You may not drive or operate machinery for a minimum of 24 hours.
- Avoid flying for 5 days if upper back teeth were removed.

In case of bleeding:

- A gauze compress has been placed over the wound. Apply modest pressure with biting. This should remain for one-half hour.
- Should slight bleeding continue, place another gauze compress and bite with modest pressure for an additional one-half hour. This may need to be repeated 3-4 times.
- If bleeding continues, moisten a small tea bag and place it over the wound while biting for 30 minutes. Repeat if necessary.
- Slight oozing may continue for 1-2 days.

Symptoms which may occur:

- Swelling of the face is common, and usually is maximized at day three and is resolved by day four to six. This does not imply infection is present. If swelling increases after the fifth day, notify the office.
- Pain is normal after your procedure. Pain medications are often necessary for two to three days. After this the discomfort is often subsided with Advil. You may take two to three Advil every six hours.
- Stiffness of the jaws is common and usually relaxes within one week.
- Bruising may appear by the 2nd or 3rd day and often resolves by day ten.
- Slight numbness of the lip and/or tongue may occur as was previously explained. If the numbness persists for longer than one week, please inform your doctor at the follow-up appointment or by telephone.
- After anesthesia, drowsiness may persist up to 24-36 hours. If this occurs do not drive or remain without supervision.

Instructions from the Doctor

Different people recover from wisdom tooth surgery at different rates. Depending on the nature of the surgery, your age and your individual recovery capacity, you should expect to get back to regular work in 2-4 days.

We have made every effort to give you all the information you will need for a rapid recovery.

MEDS AFTER SURGERY

PAIN MEDICATIONS

Prescription pain medicines are for severe pain following surgery. It is recommended to take these 2-4 hours following your surgery prior to the numbing wearing off and to continue every 4-6 hours for a total of 24 hours. For severe pain, you can alternate one prescription pain pill (those with Tylenol – Acetaminophen- in them such as Vicodin) with two or three Advil every few hours for severe pain. These medicines may cause mild stomach aches, so take with food. After this, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicines such as Advil will take care of most discomfort and help with swelling.

If you develop severe throbbing pain 3-4 days after your surgery which is not relieved with pain medication, notify our office.

MEDROL DOSE PACK

The short dose of oral steroids greatly diminishes facial swelling. The Medrol Dose Pak is a tapering dose pack which should begin **the morning of** your surgery, complete all of “First Day” row. You will finish “First Day” row during the remainder of the day of your surgery.

Chlorhexidine Oral Rinse

Chlorhexidine is a mouth rinse with antibacterial properties. Swish with it the **evening** before your surgery and again in the **morning** before coming to the office. **Do not use Chlorhexidine again until 24 hours after surgery.** Then rinse three a day for 14 days after surgery and then discontinue.

ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics are not routinely prescribed for simple extractions unless there is evidence of preoperative infection, or if patients are at a high risk of developing infections (ie Diabetes). If you are prescribed antibiotics (Penicillin, Keflex, Clindamycin, Erythromycin, Tetracycline's, etc.), you should complete the entire course. Erythromycins should be taken on an empty stomach. Tetracyclines should not be taken with milk products. Otherwise, antibiotics may be taken with food.

As with any drug, side effects and allergies may develop. If you develop a skin rash, difficulty breathing or diarrhea, stop taking all medicine and notify the doctor.

PHENERGAN or ZOFRAN

Phenergan or Zofran is used post operatively to prevent nausea and vomiting. If you experience these symptoms, Phenergan or Zofran should be taken with food thirty minutes prior to taking your pain medications.

PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE SURGERY APPOINTMENT