



CARE FOLLOWING MINOR ORAL SURGERY PROPER CARE FOLLOWING SURGICAL PROCEDURES IN THE MOUTH WILL HASTEN RECOVERY AND PREVENT COMPLICATIONS

It is essential that you -

1. Maintain continuous firm pressure on gauze pad placed over the wound for 30 minutes.
2. Do not rinse or disturb wound in any way.
3. Take medication as directed.
4. Do not engage in excessive activity.

PAIN

Pain following oral surgery is to be expected. The severity of pain varies considerably from one person to another and with the nature of the surgery. If the medication you have seems inadequate or if severe pain continues beyond 48 hours, contact your dentist. Further treatment may be required.

BLEEDING

You may expect a small amount of bleeding during the first 24 hours. If bleeding becomes excessive:

1. Gently wipe out your mouth with a clean gauze pad.
2. Fold clean gauze into a thick pad (a lightly moistened teabag may be used) and place directly over the bleeding area. Maintain continuous firm pressure for at least 30 minutes.
3. Repeat if necessary.
4. It may help to keep your head elevated while resting.

AVOID: Rinsing, poking with tongue or fingers, sucking or excessive activity.

DO NOT: Smoke, drink alcoholic beverages or hot liquids

If you are still unable to control bleeding, contact your dentist.

SWELLING

Swelling to varying degrees may occur following oral surgery. To minimize swelling, apply an ice pack (cold compress) to affected side of face - on 10 minutes - off 10 minutes for the 3-4 hours following surgery. **DO NOT APPLY HEAT.** It may take 48 hours before swelling begins to subside; contact your dentist if the swelling increases after that time.

DISCOLORATION

A bruising of the skin sometimes occurs. This will disappear without treatment in 5-7 days.

MOUTH CARE

Do not rinse mouth for 24 hours following surgery. Provided there is no bleeding, you may rinse after this time with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt dissolved in approximately 6 oz. of warm water). Afterwards, clean your mouth as usual, avoiding the wound.

DIET

Adequate nutrition is important for proper healing. Eat soft nutritious foods such as: Eggs, chopped meats, custards, milkshakes, and juices. Avoid HOT foods and liquids.

DIFFICULTY IN OPENING MOUTH

Difficulty in opening the mouth occasionally occurs and should begin to disappear gradually within 2-3 days.

COMPLICATIONS

Even with proper care, complications sometimes arise following oral surgery. The most common problems are described in the preceding sections, but in case of unusual disturbances, do not hesitate to consult with your dentist.

SEDATIVES

Depressant type drugs (sedatives, tranquilizers, etc.) are sometimes administered before surgery. The effects of these drugs may seem to wear off within the first hour or two but reflexes may be impaired for up to 24 hours. Therefore, you should not drive a car; operate machinery or travel unescorted for the period of time.

SUTURES AND PROTECTIVE DRESSINGS

Sutures (stitches) are frequently placed during surgery. It is usual to remove them after one week if they are not the dissolving type. Occasionally one may come out spontaneously before then. This is not usually significant.

Hard protective dressings are placed over the wound following certain surgical procedures. Do not be concerned if small chips break off, but if a major portion of the dressing comes free within 4-5 days, consult with your dentist. In the meantime you may be able to replace the fragment with soft wax or sugarless chewing gum.

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