



CARE FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

Proper care of the mouth following most surgical procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area.

1. **Protection of the blood clot** – To stop the bleeding, maintain firm pressure by biting on the gauze pack that has been placed over the surgical area (make sure the gauze is over the extraction sites). Keep steady firm pressure for 45 minutes. Change gauze pack as needed until the bleeding stops. If bright red bleeding continues after 4 hours, moisten a Lipton tea bag, squeeze out excess water, and place tea bag directly over extraction site. Apply firm pressure for 45 minutes.
2. **Ice packs** – Apply an ice pack to the cheek or jaw by the extraction site -- 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off – for the first 24 hours. No ice after 24 hours.
3. **Do not rinse, brush or spit** for 24 hours. Do not use a straw for 3 days. The motion of the above can dislodge the blood clot and cause bleeding and in some instances a dry socket. Also, do not use mouthwash for 72 hours; the alcohol in the mouthwash can irritate the surgical site and slow the healing process.
4. **Warm salt water rinses** – After 24 hours, mix ½ teaspoon salt with 8 oz. warm water. Gently rinse thoroughly with the salt water, especially around the extraction sites, and spit out. Do this 4-5 times a day, especially after meals. Continue salt water rinses for 7 days.
5. **Discomfort ...**following surgical procedures is normal and to be expected. Take **pain medication** as prescribed and as needed. Medication, drugs, anesthetics and prescriptions may cause drowsiness and lack of awareness and coordination therefore you should not operate any vehicle, automobile or hazardous devices while taking such medications and/or drugs or until fully recovered from the effects of same. Completely finish any antibiotics if prescribed. However, if a fever or excessive swelling or rash is noticed, call the office **IMMEDIATELY!**
6. **If you were sedated (put to sleep) you can not drive a vehicle for 24 hours. Your escort should remain with you for the remainder of the day.**
7. **Eating...**adequate food and fluid intake following surgery and/or general extractions is most important. We recommend a soft diet for a couple of days. If desired, you may supplement your diet with liquids, such as Carnation Instant Breakfast which will provide you with the proper nutrition. Use an extra pillow to sleep at a 45-degree angle--it helps to relieve swelling.
8. **Avoid...**all excessive activity. Don't pick at the surgical area. Avoid all alcoholic beverages. **DO NOT SMOKE** until healing is well established – 1 week minimum.
9. **Sutures...**if they were used, will normally dissolve or fall out within 7-10 days. It is important to keep your post-operative appointment to ensure proper healing.
10. **Allergic reactions...**rash, itching, etc. **CALL IMMEDIATELY!**
11. **Do not hesitate to call if any questions arise. The doctors are available 24 hours.**

We hope these instructions will aid your healing from your surgical procedure. Listed below, for your convenience, are the office telephone numbers. If you are calling after hours, your call will be answered by our answering service who will contact the doctors who will then call you back.

St. George: 435-673-1554 or Cedar City: 435-867-1474
After office hours, please call the St. George office or toll free 1-800-731-1554