



Palm Beach Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

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Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully.

Immediately Following Surgery

- Do not eat on the side where the surgery was for 1 week. Eat a soft diet for 3 days.
- 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 replaced until bleeding stops.
- Start the peridex mouthrinse the day after surgery for 5 days. 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 wearing off.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and do not lift weights the 2 days following surgery. You may resume normal workouts after day 3.
- Place ice packs on the side of your face where surgery was performed for 15 minutes at a time intermittently throughout day 1. After the 1st day, do not use ice packs.
- Brushing your teeth is okay — just be gentle at the surgical sites.
- The sutures will dissolve on their own in 1 week

- Feeling numbness for the entire first day is completely normal as we use long acting numbing medication for your comfort. Please call Dr. Curtis the morning after surgery if you are still numb.

Diet

After surgery, drink from a glass and do not use a straw, as 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 drinking 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.

Soft diet – Anything that can be cut with a fork

- Liquids like juice and smoothies
- Scrambled eggs
- Mashed potatoes
- Oatmeal
- Pancakes
- Smoothies
- Pudding
- Gelatin
- Ice cream

- Yogurt
- Applesauce
- Mashed bananas
- Avocado

Stay away from small things like rice, sharp foods like chips, or any very hot substances

Bleeding

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon. It may appear like there is more blood due to mixing with saliva.

Excessive bleeding may be controlled by placing a gauze pad over the area and biting as firmly as possible for thirty minutes. Repeat if necessary. In order to stop bleeding, the pressure from the gauze must be placed directly over the surgical area. Chewing on the gauze only stimulates saliva flow, increases the risk of more bleeding, and risks injury to the numb oral structures.

If bleeding continues, gently wipe away any formed clot over the surgical site and bite on a moistened tea bag for thirty minutes. Any tea works. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels. If bleeding does not subside, please call the office for further instructions.

Swelling

Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes and sides of the face is not uncommon. Swelling and mild bruising is normally expected and is usually proportional to the surgery involved. This is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual

repair. Many times the swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until 3 days post-operatively.

However, the swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. A bag filled with ice, or ice packs should be applied to the sides of the face where surgery was performed. The ice packs should be used intermittently for 15 minutes at a time for the first day. After the first 24 hours, ice has no beneficial effect to reduce swelling.

Some discoloration (bruising) is common. 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. Bruising can take 14 days to resolve.

Pain

For severe pain, take the prescribed pain medication tablets as directed. The prescribed pain medicine might make you feel groggy and will slow down your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages.

Pain or discomfort following surgery is usually at its worst 24-48 hours after surgery, after that it should subside more and more every day.

Keep the mouth clean

No rinsing should be performed 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 with peridex after you eat for 5 days.

Antibiotics

Take the tablets or liquid as directed. Antibiotics will be given to help prevent or treat infection. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea and vomiting are common side effects of IV sedation, general anesthesia, and many narcotic oral pain medications. In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, do not take anything by mouth for at least an hour, including the prescribed pain medicine. You should then sip on coke, tea, or ginger ale. You should sip slowly over a fifteen-minute period. Once nausea subsides, you can begin taking solid foods and restart the prescribed pain medicine. If nausea and vomiting do not resolve, please contact our office.

Other Complications

- If numbness of the lip, chin, or tongue is present for the first entire day post-operatively, there is no cause for alarm. As stated before surgery, this is usually temporary in nature due to the local anesthetic. You should be aware that if your lip or tongue is numb, you could bite them and not feel the sensation. If you still have a numb lip or chin the day after surgery, please immediately contact Dr. Curtis. There are specific medications that can help with regaining feeling.
- If the corners of your mouth are stretched, they may dry out and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with lip balm.

Sutures

Sutures are placed in the area of surgery to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. Sometimes the sutures disintegrate early or are dislodged. This is no cause for alarm, simply remove the suture from your mouth and discard it or come in to the office and Dr. Curtis or staff will remove it. **The sutures will dissolve approximately 1 week after surgery.**