



SOUTHWEST ORAL SURGICAL ARTS

WISDOM TEETH, PERIODONTAL & DENTAL IMPLANT CENTER

## CARE FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY

Proper care of the mouth following most surgical procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area. Follow these guidelines to help make you more comfortable during the recovery process.

1. **Controlling the bleeding** –Following a surgical procedure it is normal to have post-operative bleeding. 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/surgical site(s) and you are not biting on the gauze with your teeth. Keep constant firm pressure for 30-45 minutes. Change gauze pack as needed until the bleeding stops or gauze begins to come out light pink. Surgical site may ooze slightly for about 24 hours. **If bright red bleeding continues after 4 hours**, moisten a Lipton black tea bag, squeeze out excess water, and place tea bag directly over extraction site. Apply firm pressure for 45 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please give our office a call.
2. **Swelling** –Expect the swelling to peak 48 to 72 hours following surgery. To help minimize swelling, keep your head elevated while resting. Apply an ice pack to the cheek or jaw by the extraction site- 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off- for the first 24-72 hrs. Do not continue the ice packs beyond 72 hrs.
3. **Healing - Do not rinse, brush or spit** for 24 hours. **Do not use a straw or smoke for 3 days.** After a surgical procedure, a blood clot forms in the surgical site. The blood clot is necessary for proper healing. The negative pressure or suction of using a straw/smoking can dislodge the blood clot, leading to delayed healing, and in some instances a dry socket. Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours following your procedure. Also, do not use mouthwash for 72 hours; the alcohol in the mouthwash can irritate the surgical site and slow the healing process. Resume brushing after 24 hours with a standard toothbrush. Be careful not to irritate the surgical site(s) with the toothbrush.
4. **Warm salt water rinses** –**After 24 hours, mix ¼ teaspoon salt with 4 oz. warm water.** It is highly recommended to rinse thoroughly with the salt water, focusing especially around the extraction sites. Gently spit out salt water- as you would a normal mouth rinse. **Do this rinse 4-5 times a day, especially after meals. Continue salt water rinses for 7 days.** Do not purchase a syringe to irrigate the surgical sites. You run the risk of flushing out a blood clot before it is properly formed. We will give you a syringe at your follow-up visit if it is needed.
5. **Discomfort and Pain Management** - Following surgical procedures, it is normal to experience soreness and swelling. For Adults (12 years of age and older), we will prescribe 600mg Ibuprofen, unless medically contraindicated. Take (1) 600mg Ibuprofen WITH (1) Extra Strength Acetaminophen (Tylenol), every 6 hours for 3-4 days following surgery. This should reduce and likely eliminate the need for opioid pain medication. If an opioid pain

medication is prescribed, it is recommended to only fill the prescription if you are not getting adequate pain relief. Otherwise, shred and dispose of the prescription.

**Always take medications as prescribed. DO NOT drive or operate any vehicle while taking narcotics until you are fully recovered from the effects of the medication as they may cause drowsiness and lack of awareness and coordination.** Many patients will also receive a prescription for an antibiotic. It is an important part of insuring you have the best healing process as possible. Completely finish any antibiotics if prescribed. However, if a fever or excessive swelling or rash is noticed, call our office.

6. **If you had IV anesthesia, you cannot 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 is highly important. We recommend a liquid diet for the first 24 hours (milkshakes, smoothies, Jello, pudding, yogurt, etc), then a soft diet for the following 3-4 days. If desired, you may supplement your diet with liquids such as Carnation Instant Breakfast which will provide you with the proper nutrition. You should also avoid rice and other small particles that may irritate the surgical sites.
8. **Sleep Apnea** – Patients who use a CPAP should continue the use of their CPAP whenever sleeping, especially if using any prescribed narcotic pain medications.
9. **Avoid** - Excessive activity for 5 days. Don't pick at the surgical area. Avoid all alcoholic beverages while taking pain medications. DO NOT SMOKE until healing is well established – 1 week minimum. This includes E-cigarettes.
10. **Sutures** - If they were placed, they will normally dissolve or fall out within 5-10 days depending upon the type of suture used. Some types of stitches will not dissolve on their own. These types of stitches will be removed for you at a later scheduled appointment.
11. **Allergic reactions** (e.g.: rash, itching, etc.)- **Call the office.**

**\*Do not hesitate to call if any questions arise\***

Our office telephone numbers are listed below for your convenience. If you are calling after hours, our answering service will take your call and then contact the doctors with the pertinent information for them to call you back.

**St. George: 435-673-1554 or Cedar City: 435-867-1474**

Thank you for choosing Southwest Oral Facial & Implant Surgery!  
Dr. Erik Nielsen D.D.S., M.D. Dr. Matthew Mizukawa D.M.D. Dr. John Mizukawa D.D.S.

[www.SouthwestOralSurgeons.com](http://www.SouthwestOralSurgeons.com)