

Post-operative instructions following oral surgery

AVOID rinsing or spitting for 24 hours after the extraction.

AVOID strenuous exercise for 24 hours after the procedure.

AVOID alcoholic drinks for 24 hours after the procedure.

If you smoke, **AVOID** this for as long as possible after the extraction, and for at least 24 hours.

PAIN

- There should be no pain immediately after the operation, due to the local anaesthetic used. This should last for 3 to 4 hours before sensation returns slowly, and care should be taken to avoid biting the lip or tongue during this time.
- Pain tends to be worse on the second or third day, but gradually improves over a period of 7 to 10 days.
- Simple painkillers such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or co-dydramol should control the pain.
- If there is a sudden increase in pain after a few days, this may indicate a dry socket or infection, and the practice should be contacted.
- If you feel small pieces of bone working their way out of the socket, do not worry: this is normal.

SWELLING

- This is common after surgery has been carried out in the jaw.
- The swelling reaches its maximum 2 to 3 days after surgery.
- The swelling should resolve 7 to 10 days after surgery.
- Bruising of the face occasionally occurs and can take up to 2 weeks to resolve.

BLEEDING

- This should be minimal by the time you leave the surgery.
- Blood stained saliva is to be expected for 24 to 48 hours after the operation.
- Do not rinse the mouth for the first day. This may disturb the blood clot and cause bleeding.
- If persistent bleeding occurs, roll up a piece of gauze, place it over the wound and bite firmly for a period of at least 15 minutes.

ORAL HYGIENE

- The next day, use a hot salt-water mouth bath. The water should be as warm as possible, with a spoonful of salt added. Take a mouthful and hold it still for a couple of minutes before spitting out. Repeat 4 times daily. This will help healing.
- Keep your teeth clean with gentle tooth brushing if possible. A toothbrush can be softened under a hot tap.
- Chlorhexidine (Corsodyl) mouthwash will help reduce plaque while tooth brushing is difficult.

DIET

- Your mouth opening will be restricted for about a week.

- Eating semi-solid food should be possible.
- Use your own discretion, and gradually start eating normally at your own pace.

STITCHES

- If you have stitches (sutures) in your mouth, these should dissolve and drop out after a period of 7 to 10 days.

MEDICATION

- Antibiotics are sometimes required and will be prescribed only if necessary.
- If you are prescribed antibiotics and are on the contraceptive pill, it may become ineffective. In this case you should take extra precautions according to your pill instructions.

TIME OFF WORK

- This will depend on your profession and the amount of surgery.
- The average time off work should be between 3 and 5 days, but there is a great deal of variation between individuals.

FOLLOW UP AND ADVICE

- Your surgeon may arrange follow-up appointments if needed, to check the healing and deal with any complications.
- If you have any concerns, please contact the practice by phone.

Outside working hours. For urgent concerns when the practice is closed, contact NHS 111 or your local emergency department.

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