

WISDOM TEETH EXTRACTION: Postoperative Instructions

We care about you and want your postoperative course to be as comfortable and uneventful as possible. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call the doctors at their home at (303) 442-4926. The following instructions if followed will help insure that any post surgical discomfort will be minimized.

1. **To Prevent Excess Bleeding:** Any gauze placed in the mouth at the time of surgery should be maintained with heavy bite pressure and not removed before 45 minutes. After 45 minutes, remove the gauze; slight bleeding is to be expected. If excessive, place additional gauze over the surgical site(s), and reapply bite pressure for 45 minutes. Repeat as necessary. It is usually not necessary to repeat this more than 1 or 2 times. Do not remove the gauze more frequently than 45 minutes as repeated removal and reinsertion over shorter periods of time may, in fact, increase bleeding. Keep your fingers and tongue away from the area of surgery and do not disturb the wound in any way. After 24 hours, you can gently (not vigorously) rinse your mouth with cool water. Care should be taken not to disturb any blood clots. Stay away from spitting or brushing too hard. It is fine to gently brush and clean the area.

2. **SMOKING** greatly increases the likelihood of pain and poor healing. **DO NOT SMOKE** for 3 days after your surgery.

3. **SWELLING** may be expected in variable amounts for 1-3 days after surgery. **MORE** swelling may occur on the second or third day after surgery than on the first day. This is normal. It should decrease within a day. To minimize swelling, place an ice pack on the outside of the cheek in the area of the surgery. Use the ice pack intermittently (20 minutes on/20minutes off) for the first 24 hours after surgery. Hot packs can be used after 48 hours, such as a hot wash cloth or a heating pad on low.

4. **FOOD.** A light diet and plenty of liquids (teas, milkshakes, jello, soups, etc.) is advised during the first 24 hours. You will feel better, have more strength, less pain, and heal faster if you continue to eat and drink. **AVOID** sucking through a straw, and alcoholic beverages, carbonated beverages, and smoking as they can cause poor or delayed healing and may lead to increased pain and chance of infection.

5. **PAIN** may be expected soon after surgery and usually reaches its peak during the first few hours after surgery. It is important that you take the anti-inflammatory pain medicine (usually ibuprophen.) Inflammation causes the pain; keeping it under control is most important. Depending on the surgery, antibiotics or other pain medicine may be prescribed. Add these to the anti-inflammatory and take as directed. If a narcotic is prescribed, take it with some food as it does tend to cause nausea. One should not drive while taking the narcotic pain medication. Continue taking the medication as needed for pain and if an antibiotic is prescribed, it is critical that you take the full course (usually 7-10 days.)

6. **A FOLLOW-UP VISIT** will usually be scheduled one week after your surgery. Any sutures placed will be removed at this time and further follow-up care instructions will be given.