



TOOTH EXTRACTION - POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ ALL OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply. Common sense will often guide you, but when in doubt, follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification at 425-391-8284.

DAY OF SURGERY

FIRST HOUR:

Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them during the first hour unless bleeding is not controlled. The packs may be gently removed after one hour. If active bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to maintain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes. Continue changing the gauze as necessary (typically every 30 to 45 minutes). For comfort, moisten the gauze with tap water and loosely fluff it before placement.

EXERCISE CARE:

Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do **not** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects. You may brush your teeth gently. **Do not smoke for at least 72 hours**, as it will severely hinder healing and increase the risk of a dry socket.

OOZING:

Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. It can be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the area and biting firmly for 30-45 minutes

PERSISTENT BLEEDING:

Bleeding should never be severe. If it is, it usually means the gauze packs are being clenched between the teeth without applying pressure to the surgical areas. Try repositioning the gauze. If bleeding continues or becomes heavy, you may substitute a tea bag (soaked in very hot water, squeezed damp-dry, and wrapped in a moist gauze) for 20 to 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

SWELLING:

Swelling is common after oral surgery. It can be minimized by applying a cold pack, ice bag, or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek near the surgical site. Use 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off during the first 24 hours. If you were prescribed medication to control swelling, take it as directed. **Severe swelling of the neck or tongue is not normal and should be reported to our office immediately.**

BRUISING:

Bruising and discoloration are not unusual. For lower jaw surgeries, bruising may extend to the neck and chest, for upper jaw surgeries, into the cheek and lower eyelid. After 48 hours, bruising may be improved by applying moist heat (e.g., a towel or washcloth soaked in hot water and wrung out).



PAIN:

Most oral surgeries are accompanied by some discomfort. If prescribed, ibuprofen is best for controlling pain. Taking your first dose before the anesthetic wears off can help. Narcotic medications, if prescribed, should be taken only if necessary. They may cause nausea, so taking them with a small amount of food and plenty of water may reduce this. The most intense pain is usually within the first six hours after surgery; your need for medication should gradually decrease. If you are taking large amounts frequently, please call our office. If you anticipate needing more prescription medication for the weekend, you must call for a refill during weekday business hours.

Start your pain medication immediately after surgery but after eating. If you were prescribed antibiotics, begin taking them 6 hours after surgery. Follow the instructions provided to you by the Pharmacy. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food and taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications but call us if you feel unwell.

DIET:

Eat nourishing food that is comfortable to consume. Avoid extremely hot items and do **not use a straw for the first week**. It may help to stick to liquids or pureed foods (soups, yogurt, milkshakes, puddings) for the first four days, though this is not strictly required. Avoid hard or small foods (nuts, seeds, popcorn) that could get trapped in the surgical site. After day four, you may slowly return to solid foods. Don't skip meals—eating regularly helps you feel better, recover faster, and manage pain more effectively.

Drink water after any food (including juice) to help rinse debris or sugar from your mouth.

If you are diabetic, continue your usual dietary guidelines or those provided by your doctor.

SHARP EDGES:

If you feel something hard or sharp in the surgical areas, you are likely to feel the bony walls that once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small bone fragments may work their way out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

MOUTH RINSES:

Keeping your mouth clean is essential. Use the **Peridex rinse** as prescribed starting the day after surgery. Only use it for 5-7 days. If you received an irrigating syringe, begin using it on day three to help keep site clear of food (Note: the video shown to your escort states seven days—please disregard this and begin on day three).

Use the syringe after meals, snacks, or drinks. A hole may develop or remain in the extraction site for 3–6 weeks. It is important to insert the syringe into the hole to flush out all food debris on a regular basis.

BRUSHING:

Resume your regular oral hygiene as soon as possible. While soreness and swelling may make brushing difficult, make every effort to clean your teeth comfortably.



HOT APPLICATIONS:

After 48 hours, you may use warm compresses (hot water bottle, hot moist towels, heating pad) on the swollen areas for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. This will ease tenderness, reduce swelling and stiffness, and speed up the resolution of bruising.

HEALING:

The first two days are typically the most uncomfortable, with some swelling. By day three, you should feel better even if swelling has increased. Improvement should continue steadily afterward. If you don't see continued improvement, please call our office.

It is our goal that your recovery is as smooth and comfortable as possible. Following these instructions will help, but if you have questions about your progress, please contact the office where your surgery was performed. Our 24-hour answering service can contact the on-call doctor after hours. For faster assistance, please call during regular office hours.

PLEASE NOTE: Prescription refill requests are accepted **only during office hours.**

We wish you a smooth and speedy recovery! 😊

Sincerely,

The Issaquah Implants & Oral Surgery Team