

## Post Operative Instructions for Care after Removal of Teeth

At Commonwealth Oral and Facial Surgery, we realize that having any surgery can be stressful. Our desire is to have your post-operative course progress as smoothly as possible. These instructions provide some general guidelines with regards to post-operative care; your doctor may give you additional instructions as well. Thank you for choosing Commonwealth Oral and Facial Surgery.

### Bleeding

Do not disturb the wound. Sutures were placed and will dissolve in **7-14** days. Some bleeding or redness in the saliva is normal for 24 hours. Excessive bleeding can be controlled by placing a gauze pad on the surgical site and biting down firmly. Continue pressure for 30 minutes. If bleeding continues, place a moist tea bag over the surgical site for 30 minutes, (the tannic acid in the tea helps to form a clot). If bleeding persists, please call for further instructions.

### Swelling

Swelling can be a normal occurrence after surgery. **In some instances swelling can be worse or peak on the third to fourth day after surgery.** Should the swelling increase beyond this time period, or be accompanied by severe pain or an elevated temperature, then please notify your doctor. To minimize swelling, apply an ice pack/ bagged frozen peas or corn to the outside area that the surgery occurred in. **A good rule for proper circulation is to keep the ice pack in place for 20 minutes at a time then rest for 20 minutes. Please apply ice packs for 48 hours starting the day of surgery.** Another aid that can be used is frozen seedless grapes. Apply the grape between the surgical site and the cheek. This applies pressure and coolness. When laying down keep your head propped up on a couple of pillows, this will help reduce swelling.

### Pain Medications

To help manage post operative discomfort, your doctor may prescribe one or more prescriptions. It is a good idea to begin taking your medications while you are still numb. Usually moderate discomfort can be controlled with Tylenol or an anti-inflammatory medication (Advil/Motrin/Ibuprofen, Aleve or Etodolac). Anti-inflammatory medications can be alternated with Tylenol.

After careful consideration, your doctor may choose to prescribe an opioid (narcotic) for severe pain. It's recommended that you use this medication sparingly and make yourself aware of the possible side effects. The side effects of an opioid (narcotic) can include but aren't limited to the following: drowsiness or confusion, nausea, vomiting, and constipation. Opioid medications can be addictive in nature; therefore, they are to be taken according to the directions on the label. This type of pain medication should be used only to manage severe pain. If you need to take the opioid (narcotic) do not drink alcoholic beverages, drive or operate any machinery for 24 hours after the last dose. Please be sure to eat at least 30 minutes before taking your pain medication. Taking narcotic pain medication on an empty stomach may increase the risk of nausea. If you have persistent problem with nausea or vomiting, please notify your doctor.

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### Antibiotics

If you have been placed on antibiotics, take them as directed. If you have an unfavorable reaction such as a rash, please discontinue the medication and call the office for further instructions.

### Oral Hygiene

Mouth cleanliness is essential to good healing. Start rinsing 24 hours after your surgery. Rinse with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt to an 8 oz cup of warm water) three to four times a day. **Use the salt water rinse in addition to any other rinses prescribed by your doctor.** You may begin to brush your teeth 24 hours after surgery, and be gentle in the region(s) of the surgery.

### Diet

Drink plenty of fluids; however avoid hot/steamy hot foods and liquids. Cool soft food and liquids should be eaten on the day of surgery. You may return to a normal diet, as tolerated, beginning the day after surgery but avoid crunchy food (popcorn, pretzels, and potato chips) for a week after surgery, as these could become lodged and irritate the surgical area.

### Activities

***Risk of falling: If you have been given sedation and/or narcotic medication there is a chance you may become light headed/dizzy. Extra caution must be used to prevent falling.***

Resume normal activities a day or so after surgery, or as directed by doctor. Please keep physical activities to a minimum immediately following surgery.

**Avoid smoking** for as long as possible following surgery. The use of tobacco products slows down the healing process and may lead to developing other complications. We strongly recommend one full week.

Other instructions specific to you: \_\_\_\_\_

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