

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

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Please follow these instructions to the best of your ability. They will ensure that you recover and heal as quickly as possible. After oral surgery, post-operative instructions can be broken into four (4) categories:

BLEEDING

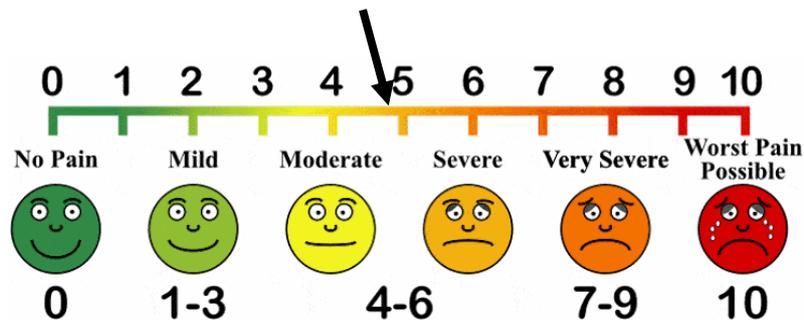
1. You will not be discharged unless you have stopped bleeding.
2. It is common however that your saliva may be discoloured (pink colour). If you think you are bleeding, look at the surgical site. If there is an ooze, place a gauze pack over the area and bite firmly. Hold for 20 minutes. If the bleeding continues, contact the clinic for advice.
3. You may have had sutures (stitches) placed. These sutures are dissolvable. They have been placed for a reason so avoid disrupting them with your tongue. They will fall out anywhere from a few days to 3 weeks.
4. It is important to not disrupt the formed blood clot as this is the scaffold for a good healing site. Avoid disrupting the blood clot in the first 24 hours by not eating or drinking anything hot.

INFECTION

1. Maintaining good oral hygiene after surgery will decrease the risk of post-operative infection. Clean your teeth as best as you can but avoid traumatising the surgical site.
2. It is important to remove food debris from the site and keep it clean. Using a rinse of salty water (1 teaspoon in warm water) or Chlorhexidine rinse (e.g. Colgate Savacol, Difflam C) will aide this. Do this as many times a day as you can but only start 24 hours after the surgery. Do this for at least 1-2 weeks.
3. Antibiotics are not always necessary after surgery. They are required in some instances. If you have been prescribed antibiotics, take them as prescribed but cease taking them if you develop any symptoms that may indicate an allergic response (e.g. rash, shortness of breath). Stop taking the medication immediately and ring the clinic for advice or 000 if it is severe reaction.
4. Unfortunately, infections can still occur. Contact the surgeon immediately if concerned. Signs of a serious spreading infection includes development of fever, difficulty swallowing or breathing.

PAIN

1. Pain after surgery is common. Pain can be moderate to high. It will last for up to a week, and typically discomfort for a week after that (2 week recovery). Pain killers can be taken to help control the discomfort.
2. Additionally, swelling and bruising may occur. It can be quite profound. Again, this is a normal response to the surgery. An ice pack on-and-off for 15 minutes at a time in the first 24-48 hours will decrease the swelling. A heat pack from days 2-7 should be used to increase circulation to the area.
3. Swelling usually reaches its peak after 2-3 days, and then remains for 3-4 days.
4. To decrease the pain, you are to take the analgesics (pain killers) prescribed. Start your first dose before the anaesthetic has worn off.



LIFESTYLE

1. It is important that you allow your body to recover after surgery. This includes sleeping, eating a nutritious diet and drinking plenty of water. You can start eating/drinking after you leave the surgery but avoid traumatising your anaesthetised tissues.
2. You should avoid alcohol for at least 48 hours. Be careful of what drugs you have been prescribed.
3. If you are a smoker, you must reduce the amount that you smoke. Smoking will increase your risk of post-operative infection, can cause inflammation of the bone (dry socket), and will delay healing. Use this as an opportunity to try to QUIT.
4. You must avoid exercise for the first 48 hours after surgery and avoid intense exercise for the first week.

Review required (YES / NO): Date: _____

Additional comments: _____