

# Dowell Family Dentistry, P.S.C.

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## Postoperative Instructions

Following any oral surgery procedure, there are several important instructions for you to follow to insure proper healing and to avoid problems. Please read and follow these items carefully

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1. **Bleeding** – Some bleeding is expected and this may continue up to 24 hours. **Be sure to bite on gauze for one hour. Change to fresh gauze once each hour as long as necessary. Be sure the gauze is placed directly over the site of bleeding and firm biting pressure is applied.** A moistened tea bag may be substituted if you run out of gauze.
2. **Pain** – Following any surgical procedure, pain and discomfort is to be expected. **If you can take ibuprofen, 600 Mg (three over-the-counter tablets) of ibuprofen, taken every six hours, is recommended as the primary pain reliever. However, the doctor may prescribe pain medication. This medication will last 2-3 days when taken as directed.** No medications can completely eliminate pain. Refills will not be made over the telephone. No pain medications will be refilled in the evenings, on weekends, or holidays. You must be seen in the clinic and re-evaluated by the doctor. Drowsiness is often caused by narcotic pain medication; therefore, caution must be observed by the patient in his/her activities, such as driving.
3. **Swelling** – This is also a normal event following surgery and will reach a maximum in about 48 hours. Head elevation on 2-3 pillows will help minimize swelling. Ice packs should be applied for the first 24 hours only. Care should be taken to avoid direct contact of skin to ice. If used, alternate 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.
4. **Nausea** – Many patients will experience nausea and vomiting soon after surgery. This is due to either the pain medication or a small amount of swallowed blood. Clear liquids such as ginger ale, 7-up, sprite or soup broth should be taken in small sips and this may need to be repeated if vomiting continues. If nausea has not decreased by the following day, notify our office.
5. **Oral Care** – **Do not spit or rinse your mouth for 24 hours after surgery. Do not drink through a straw. After 24 hours, gentle oral rinsing with warm salt water can be done several times a day.** A clean mouth promotes good healing. The teeth must be kept clean by brushing with a soft toothbrush 2-3 times daily. Avoid the surgical site, but clean the teeth in the area carefully. **Smoking is prohibited for 48 hours after surgery, because smoking will delay healing and increase the chance of infection.**
6. **Stitches** – If stitches are placed they will dissolve and fall out usually 5-7 days after they are placed. Avoid eating in this area or using your tongue to play with the stitches as this may cause them to untie. There is no danger if the stitches are accidentally swallowed.
7. **Diet** – Proper nutrition is important to assure rapid and effective healing. Immediately after surgery, the patient should have liquids only for 4-6 hours. **No chewing should be done until the numbness is entirely gone. When the feeling has returned soft foods may then be given.** Beginning the next day, the diet may then be advanced gradually to regular foods as the patient tolerates. Sharp foods (potato chips, tortilla chips, popcorn, etc.) should be avoided for at least 1 week.
8. If you have any further concerns or questions, please call our office at 606-877-1466