

# ALABAMA CENTER FOR ORAL SURGERY AND DENTAL IMPLANTS

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## Post- Operative Instructions

The medication or sedation which was used for your procedure will be acting in your body for the next 24 hours, so you might feel a bit sleepy. The feeling will slowly wear off. For the next 24 hours, the adult patient should not:

**SHOULD NOT** – Drive a car, operate machinery, or power tools.

**SHOULD NOT** – Drink any alcoholic beverages including beer.

**SHOULD NOT** – Make any important decisions (such as signing important documents)

**DAY OF SURGERY:** For the first hour, bite down firmly on the gauze that has been placed over the surgical areas, making sure that they remain in place. Change them every 15 minutes, for about an hour or until the bleeding stops. They may be GENTLY removed when the bleeding stops.

**EXERCISE CARE:** Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do NOT rinse your mouth or touch the surgical site. You may brush your teeth gently. DO NOT SMOKE/SPIT OR USE A STRAW for at least 72 hours as this is detrimental to healing and may cause a dry socket.

**PAIN:** Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. A prescription for pain management will be sent to your pharmacy electronically. This should be taken as directed on the label. Some pain medications can cause nausea so please eat something when taking your medication. Also, if you take the first dose before anesthesia has worn off, you can manage your pain better. If this pain medication does not manage your pain, please notify our office during normal business hours. You will also have been given an ice pack that may be placed on the outside of the cheek for the next 24 hours. After 24 hours, please use only warm moist heat, NO MORE ICE.

It also helps inflammation and pain to keep your head elevated when resting.

If you do not achieve pain relief at first, you may supplement each pain pill with an analgesic such as Tylenol or ibuprofen. Some patients may even require two pain pills at one time. Remember that the most severe pain is usually within 6 hours after the anesthetic wears off, after that your need for medication should lessen.

If you find that you are taking large amounts of pain medication at frequent intervals, please call our office. If you anticipate needing more pain medications for the weekend, you must call our office for a refill during NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS ONLY. Our office number is (334) 697-6453.

**OOZING** – Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. Bleeding may be controlled by placing a fresh icy cold gauze over the area and biting down on the gauze for 30-45 minutes at a time.

**BLEEDING** – Bleeding should never be severe. If so, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between the adjacent teeth and are not exerting enough pressure on the surgical site. Try repositioning the gauze packs first. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy, you may substitute a tea bag (soaked in hot water for 3 minutes then dipped in cold water for 1 minute, squeeze damp=dry, and wrapped in moistened gauze) for about 20-30 minutes. If the bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

**SHARP EDGES** – If you feel sharp edges or something hard in the surgical area; it is likely you are feeling the bony walls which once supported the extracted tooth. Occasionally, small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause discomfort or concern, please call our office.

**DIET** – We have seen the most optimum results for patients who have been able to stay on a cold, smooth, liquid diet as long as possible. We recommend at least 2-3 days of cold, smooth liquids. Examples: Smoothies, milkshakes, pudding, yogurt, Jell-O, ice-cream, etc. After the recommended 72 hours, you may progress to a soft food diet (macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, pasta, soups, etc.)

**FOODS TO AVOID FOR 2-3 WEEKS** – due to the risk of food impaction, avoid foods such as strawberries, popcorn, peanuts and chips for 2-3 weeks to give ample time for the extraction sites to heal.

**ACTIVITY LEVEL** – We strongly suggest that you have a responsible adult with you for the rest of the day following surgery and during the night for your protection and safety. Please rest and take it easy for the next 24 hours. Slowly increase your activity level as tolerated.

### **Post-Operative Instructions for Days Two and Three**

**MOUTH RINSES** – Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. We typically prescribe an anti-microbial mouth wash to begin using the day after surgery. You can also use ¼ teaspoon of salt dissolved into an 8-ounce glass of water and gently rinse with portions of the solution, taking 5 minutes to use an entire glassful. Repeat as often as you would like, minimum 2-3 times a day.

**BRUSHING** – Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your mouth within the bounds of your comfort.

**HOT APPLICATIONS** – You may apply warm compresses to the skin over the areas of swelling. We recommend warm heat (wet wash cloth in the microwave for a few seconds). Apply to the outside of the face for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off to help soothe tender areas and decrease swelling and stiffness.

**HEALING** – Normal healing after extractions should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there may be some swelling and bruising. On the third day, you will have the most swelling and it should start to decrease from that day on. On the fourth day, you should be more comfortable and although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. The remainder of the post-operative course will be a gradual steady improvement. If you do not see continued improvement, please call our office.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions to the best of your ability will assist you, but if you have a question about your progress, please do not hesitate to contact our office or clinical staff after hours. However, calling during normal business hours will result in the fastest possible response. Please note, the 24-hour answering service CANNOT refill narcotic prescriptions, you MUST call during normal business hours.