



AFTER CARE FOR WISDOM TOOTH REMOVAL

The removal of impacted teeth is a surgical procedure. Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully.

Immediately Following Surgery

Remove the gauze and discard after 1-2 hour time frame. In order to minimize bleeding, DO NOT drink through a straw, or smoke cigarettes for 24 hours. Do not disturb the surgical area today. (If bleeding persists, place a moist tea bag on the surgical site for about 45 minutes.)

If pain medications and/or antibiotics have been prescribed, they should be taken as directed as soon as you get home. The antibiotics and steroids (if any have been prescribed) should be taken as directed until they are completely gone. (Caution: Antibiotics may interfere with the effectiveness of birth control pills. We recommend using an alternative form of birth control while taking your prescriptions.) If the narcotics seem to be necessary, take them as prescribed.

It is important that you continue to receive nourishment. Unless otherwise directed, it is usually more comfortable to limit the diet to soft foods during the first 12-24 hours. Resume a regular diet as soon as possible. DO NOT MISS MEALS!

On the day after surgery, begin gently rinsing your mouth after meals with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in 1 cup of warm water). DO NOT rinse vigorously. Brush your teeth if possible, avoiding the surgical area for the first day or so. It is important to keep your mouth clean during the healing period.

Unless Dr. Mueller or his assistant advises you otherwise, it is recommended that you apply intermittent ice packs to your face over the area of surgery for the first 24 - 48 hours after surgery. Ice packs should be used 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off, for the first 48 hours.

Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. The average healing process can take 3-5 days.

Bleeding

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon. Excessive bleeding may be controlled by first rinsing or wiping any old clots from your mouth, then placing a gauze pad over the area and biting firmly for thirty minutes. Repeat if necessary. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for 45 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels. To minimize further bleeding, do not become excited, sit upright, and avoid exercise. If bleeding does not subside, call for further instructions.



Swelling

The swelling that is normally expected is usually proportional to the surgery involved. Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes and sides of the face is not uncommon. This is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual repair. The swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until 2-3 days post-operatively. However, the swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Two baggies filled with ice, or ice packs should be applied to the sides of the face where surgery was performed. If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. This is a normal reaction to surgery. 48 hours following surgery, the application of moist heat to the sides of the face is beneficial in reducing the size of the swelling.

Discomfort

For moderate discomfort, one or two tablets of Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol may be taken every three to four hours or Ibuprofen, (Motrin or Advil) two-four 200 mg tablets may be taken every 3-4 hours.

For severe discomfort, take the tablets prescribed as directed By Dr. Mueller. The prescribed pain medicine will make you groggy and will slow down your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Pain or discomfort following surgery should subside more and more every day. If pain persists, it may require attention and you should call the office.

Diet

After general anesthetic or I.V. sedation, liquids should be initially taken. Do not use straws. Drink from a glass. The sucking motion can cause more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot. You may eat anything soft by chewing away from the surgical sites. High calorie, high protein intake is very important. Nourishment should be taken regularly. You should prevent dehydration by taking fluids regularly. Your food intake will be limited for the first few days. You should compensate for this by increasing your fluid intake. At least 5-6 glasses of liquid should be taken daily. Try not to miss a single meal. You will feel better, have more strength, less discomfort and heal faster if you continue to eat. Caution: If you suddenly sit up or stand from a lying position you may become dizzy. If you are lying down following surgery, make sure you sit for one minute before standing.

Keep your mouth clean

No rinsing of any kind should be performed until the day following surgery. You can brush your teeth the night of surgery avoiding the surgical site and rinse gently. The day after surgery you should begin rinsing at least 5-6 times a day especially after eating with a cup of warm water mixed with a teaspoon of salt.

Discoloration

In some cases, discoloration of the skin follows swelling. The development of discoloration (bruising) is due to blood spreading beneath the tissues. This is a normal post-operative occurrence, which may occur 2-3 days post-operatively. Moist heat applied to the area may speed up the removal of the discoloration.



Antibiotics

If you have been placed on antibiotics, take the tablets or liquid as directed. Antibiotics will be given to help prevent infection. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction. Call the office if you have any questions.

Nausea and Vomiting

In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, do not take anything by mouth for at least an hour including the prescribed medicine. You should then sip on coke, tea or ginger ale. You should sip slowly over a fifteen-minute period. When the nausea subsides you can begin taking solid foods and the prescribed medicine.

Occasionally, patients may feel hard projections in the mouth with their tongue. They are not roots, they are the bony walls which supported the tooth. These projections usually smooth out spontaneously. If not, they can be removed by Dr. Mueller.

If the corners of your mouth are stretched, they may dry out and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with an ointment such as Vaseline.

Sore throats and pain when swallowing are not uncommon. The muscles get swollen. The normal act of swallowing can then become painful. This will subside in 2-3 days.

Stiffness (Trismus) of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening your mouth for a few days following surgery. This is a normal post-operative event which will resolve in time.

Healing

Resorbable Sutures (dissolvable) are placed in the area of surgery to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing.

The pain and swelling should subside more and more each day following surgery. If your post-operative pain or swelling worsens after the fourth day or unusual symptoms occur call our office for instructions.

There will be a cavity where the tooth was removed. The cavity will gradually over the next month fill in with the new tissue. In the mean time, the area should be kept clean especially after meals with salt water rinses or a toothbrush.

Brushing your teeth is okay – just be gentle at the surgical sites.

If you are involved in regular exercise, be aware that your normal nourishment intake is reduced. Exercise may weaken you. If you get light headed, stop exercising.