



VIRGINIA DENTAL &  
ANESTHESIA ASSOCIATES

a multi-specialty practice

## Post Operative Adult Surgery Instructions

### **Local Anesthesia**

The length of time you experience numbness varies depending on the type of anesthesia administered. While you are still numb, be careful not to bite your lip or tongue. The numbness may last from 2 to 6 hours.

### **Bleeding**

Bleeding generally lasts for several hours after surgery especially when more than one site is operated. Gauze will be placed over the surgical areas to limit active bleeding and to promote clot formation. The gauze should be left in place for 30-45 minutes if possible. Bite gently, but do not chew the gauze pack. There will be some mild bleeding or oozing after the gauze is removed until clotting takes place. If the bleeding is mild, leave the surgical area alone. If the bleeding is still heavy, follow these instructions:

- Fold a piece of gauze into a pad thick enough to bite onto and place it on the surgical site.
- Apply firm pressure by biting on the pad and maintain this for 30-60 minutes.
- If the pad still becomes soaked, rinse out the mouth gently and clean the mouth with gauze and replace it with a new pack over the surgical sites at least one more time.
- Do not swallow blood if possible; do not play with the site with your tongue.
- Apply an ice pack to your face on the same side as the bleeding.
- Do not recline into the horizontal position; sleep if necessary in the semi-sitting position.
- If heavy bleeding persists, call the office during working hours or the emergency numbers listed for each doctor.

### **The Blood Clot**

After surgery, a blood clot forms over the wound. This is normal and important for healing. Therefore avoid any activity that could disturb the clot.

- Do not smoke for 24 hours, vigorously spit, or drink through a straw. Only rinse your mouth gently.
- Resume normal tooth brushing but avoid the surgical sites.
- Limit strenuous activity or exercise for 24 hours because this elevates your blood pressure and may promote more bleeding.
- If stitches have been placed, this assists in clot formation. They may be self-dissolving or may need to be removed.

### **Medication**

Pain medication and /or antibiotics may have been prescribed. Use them as directed! Do not “double the dose” unless the doctor has advised as such either before leaving the office or by phone. If there is prolonged pain or fever, call the doctor for advice.

Generally over-the-counter analgesic (i.e. tylenol or ibuprofen) can have added benefit.

### **Discomfort and Swelling**

After surgery apply ice to your face for up to 24 hours. Apply the ice pack on the face for 20 minutes and then off for 20 minutes. If surgery was done on both sides, each side can be alternated. The day after surgery, do not apply ice anymore. Heat can reduce swelling that is present beginning the third day. It can be applied at the same time intervals, as was the ice, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. The most swelling occurs around 48-72 hours and takes about 5 days to completely go away.

### **Diet**

After surgery, drink lots of liquids but only eat soft or semi-solid foods after the numbness wears off. This way you will not choke and possibly inhale food into the lungs. Avoid alcohol and hot liquids for at least a couple of days. On the day of surgery it is best to have soft foods only. You can begin solid foods the day after surgery, chewing on the least uncomfortable side if possible.

### **Nausea and Vomiting**

Nausea occurs in about 10% of the patients and can be caused by swallowing blood. It can also occur from the pain medication and antibiotics. Over the counter, **chamomile tea** is a good home remedy. Drink all you want! Also room temperature ginger ale is helpful. If this does not help, over the counter anti nausea medication like Zantac, can be used. If there is no relief call the doctor.

### **When to Call the Doctor**

- Heavy uncontrollable bleeding that persists for several hours
- Severe pain that lasts for more than 24 hours
- Swelling that does not begin to go away after the third day despite using heat
- Nausea that lasts for more than a day or two
- Vomiting that lasts more than 24 hours
- Itching, rash or hive from medications

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