



Lehman & Menis
ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY
DENTAL IMPLANT CENTER

**POST-OPERATIVE
HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

**GENERAL ANESTHESIA
PRECAUTIONS:**

****DO NOT LEAVE PATIENT UNATTENDED FOR THE FIRST 12 HOURS.**
****PLEASE CLOSELY SUPERVISE PATIENT WHEN GETTING UP OR GOING TO THE BATHROOM.**

MEDICATIONS:

Please refer to your medication information sheets if you were given prescriptions. If you have any reaction to medications prescribed, call the doctor immediately.

**MANAGING BLEEDING
AFTER SURGERY:**

(FOR THE FIRST HOUR AFTER SURGERY) Keep firm pressure on the surgical site with the gauze that was placed in your mouth after surgery. Remove gauze after 1 hour

IF BLEEDING CONTINUES:

Take 1 piece of gauze, fold it in quarters creating a firm pad and place the pad over the surgical site. Use firm biting pressure where possible (extraction site), or direct finger pressure by holding the gauze (biopsy site). You may have to repeat this procedure several times. The bleeding should stop within 2-3 hours, but you can expect to see blood-tinged saliva for up to 24-48 hours following surgery. If bleeding is heavy, or continues after 2 hours, moisten a tea bag, place on surgical site, and apply pressure or bite firmly for 30 minutes. This usually stops the bleeding.

Please remember, most bleeding is controlled and stopped with a well positioned gauze, or tea bag with direct pressure. If bleeding is heavy or continues after 24 hours, call the doctor. Do not rinse, spit, or use a straw the day of surgery, as this can cause bleeding to resume.

TO REDUCE SWELLING:

ICE FOR THE INITIAL 24 HOURS. Use ice packs applied to the face for 20 minute intervals (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off). If oral surgery was performed on both the right and left sides, it is recommended to use one ice pack and alternate sides every 20 minutes. This is the most effective way to reduce swelling. Swelling usually reaches its maximum 2 days following surgery. To help reduce swelling, sit semi-reclined in a reclining chair; or if lying down, keep your head elevated with 2-3 pillows.

ICING SHOULD BE DISCONTINUED AFTER 24 HOURS. While icing your face may feel good, it will act to increase swelling. Again, DO NOT ice beyond 24 hours.

HEAT BEGINNING 1 DAY AFTER SURGERY. Warm, moist compresses applied to swollen areas will help to limit discomfort and aid in resolving any swelling which does occur. This can be applied for 1-2 hours in the evening for the next week, or while swelling is present.

ORTHODONTIC RETAINERS:

If you have orthodontic retainers,

please do not use them immediately after surgery. Use of your retainers can resume 1-3 days after the procedure or as comfort allows.

DIET:

RESUME YOUR DIET IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SURGERY. When you get home, start with a milkshake, smoothie or other thick liquid using a spoon, **NOT** a straw. Your diet should be limited to cool and soft foods for the first day. Sometimes numbness from local anesthesia may last for hours so therefore, hot foods and liquids should be avoided as they can cause a burn. A normal diet can be resumed as tolerated. Most foods can be eaten as long as care is taken to avoid the surgical sites. The following are some suggested softer foods: pancakes with syrup, eggs and pastas like macaroni and cheese or spaghetti.

ORAL HYGIENE: (RINSING / BRUSHING)

RINSE WITH WARM SALT WATER OR TAP WATER BEGINNING 3 DAYS AFTER SURGERY. To make salt water rinse, add a teaspoon of salt to 4-5 oz. of warm water. Rinse at least 3 times per day; in the morning, after meals, and before bed.

With teeth extractions, you may have been given a plastic irrigating syringe. Begin using this syringe 3 days after your extraction. Using tap or salt water, gently irrigate only the lower extraction site(s)

once a day, to remove any food debris that may persist after rinsing, until all debris is removed.

Do not use over-the-counter mouthwash, such as Scope or Listerine, as these can irritate the surgery site and cause slow healing. Resume brushing your teeth the day after surgery, being careful to avoid the surgical sites. It is not unusual to see traces of blood on your toothbrush.

ACTIVITY AND SMOKING: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SHOULD BE LIMITED AFTER ORAL SURGERY PROCEDURES. Vigorous exercise or organized sports should not be resumed until 3-5 days after surgery or as your condition allows. Please contact our office if a written excuse is needed for organized sports or gym class.

Smoking after oral surgery procedures can significantly delay healing and cause an increase in post-operative pain. Therefore, you should refrain from smoking as long as possible.

STITCHES:

Stitches that have been placed are usually dissolving and will fall out on their own within the first four days or possibly longer. It is not unusual for one or more stitches to loosen and fall out before dissolving, especially in moving areas of your mouth, such as the tongue or cheek areas. If the stitches come out, and the wound opens creating

a hole, it is typically not of concern, unless there is excessive bleeding. Fortunately, incisions in the mouth do heal very quickly and any wound that does open will close naturally.

FOLLOW-UP VISITS:

If a follow-up visit is necessary, an appointment would have been scheduled for you. Post-operative appointments are always available. Please call the office during business hours if you would like to be seen.

WHEN YOU GET HOME:

1. Remove gauze packing.
2. Drink at least ¼ of your milkshake using a spoon - **NOT** a straw.
3. Take Ibuprofen (preferred) or another pain reliever immediately, unless you were already given Ibuprofen in recovery.
4. Take the antibiotic, (if prescribed) as directed.
5. Replace the gauze packing, if necessary.
6. Begin ice packs to the outside of your face, as explained previously.
7. Increase your fluid intake throughout the day.

AVERAGE RECOVERY:

With most oral surgery procedures, sometimes post-operative discomfort can actually worsen between the 3rd and 5th day. This discomfort is considered normal and should be managed with your pain medication. If you have significant discomfort, even with pain medication, or you cannot tolerate the pain medication, please call the office.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR:

If there is a drug reaction, significant swelling, persistent pain or bleeding, or any other unusual reactions, call the office immediately. Additionally, if you have any questions during the post-operative period, do not hesitate to call. There is an answering service to respond to emergencies at all times when the office is closed.

WE APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CARE FOR YOU.

