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AFTER
SURGERY
INFORMATION
PACK

Patient instructions
following oral surgery

SUMMARY —

Do not rinse your mouth out until the next day after surgery to prevent further bleeding.

Bleeding can occur after oral surgery and responds well to direct pressure inside the mouth with the gauze supplied or with a handkerchief.

Swelling is usually expected after oral surgery and reaches its peak 24–30 hours after surgery.

Toothbrushing may recommence 24 hours after surgery.

Take medication as prescribed; pain killers are best taken to prevent pain prior to its peak. You can buy e.g. Mersyndol, Panadeine or Nurofen medication to help with the pain direct from your chemist.

PROBLEMS —

There are detailed instructions below and overleaf that cover common problems.

If you have concerns please contact me on : 9650 1922 (Rooms) or 9387 1000 (After Hours / Emergency).

If pain or nausea is a problem please contact your anaesthetist.

BLEEDING —

If bleeding does occur, use the gauze supplied or a rolled handkerchief to apply direct firm pressure to the bleeding site for one hour and cease mouth rinsing for 24 hours. If bleeding persists please contact me.

PACKS —

If gauze packs are in the mouth, remove these 2 hours after surgery

SWELLING —

Swelling is a normal response to oral surgery and usually reaches its peak 24–30 hours following surgery. It often varies from one side of the face to another depending on the degree of difficulty of surgery. The swelling will start subsiding significantly after 4–5 days. Ice packs may be applied to the cheeks in the first 24 hours to help decrease pain and swelling. A packet of frozen vegetables is a good makeshift ice pack.



BRUISING —

Bruising may develop as the swelling starts to subside and will fade in time.

DISCOMFORT —

Discomfort always occurs with varying intensity and it is important to take pain killers regularly. Discomfort should decrease appreciably after 2-3 days with a resultant decrease in the need for pain killing medication. There may be limitation in mouth opening, this is normal, and will pass as swelling subsides. If pain persists please contact your on duty anaesthetist.

ORAL HYGIENE —

Do not rinse your mouth until the next day after surgery. Mouthrinsing in the early stages post-operatively will cause bleeding, commence mouthrinsing the next day after surgery. A teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water six times daily is recommended.

Toothbrushing may recommence 24 hours after surgery.

Avoid smoking to enhance healing.

STITCHES —

Dissolving sutures will be used in almost all cases; these will fall out or dissolve in approximately 7-21 days following surgery.

NAUSEA —

Nausea and/or vomiting following oral surgery can occur and may relate to medication or swallowed blood. If nausea is a problem, avoid spicy or dairy foods and have clear fluids only for 12 hours. A bicarbonate elixir, e.g. DEXSAL is often helpful. If vomiting persists please contact your on duty anaesthetist.

INFECTION —

Infection is uncommon following oral surgery. In most cases, antibiotics will have already been prescribed post-operatively to prevent infection. If infection does develop, it will show itself by swelling re-appearing, or discomfort returning, or the onset of a discharge.

DIET —

Diet will need to be restricted to fluids and to soft foods initially and keep up fluids with non-dairy drinks such as lemonade or sports drinks. A gradual return to normal diet is recommended over 2 days.

REST —

Rest is encouraged for the first few days following surgery. Sleep with your head slightly elevated to decrease swelling. In the early hours following surgery, do not stand up suddenly as you may feel light headed, sit on the side of the bed for a minute or so prior to standing up.



Specific instructions for particular procedures

JAW SURGICAL EXPANSION —

There will be an appliance on the roof of the mouth that should be activated within 14 days of surgery and you should be in contact with your orthodontist about this. To prevent nose bleeds do not blow your nose for 14 days after surgery.

TOOTH EXPOSURES —

If you have had a tooth exposed, a special single tuft toothbrush will be supplied. Commence circular tooth brushing over the exposed tooth as soon as practical, about 2 days after surgery.

SINUS SURGERY —

To prevent nose bleeds do not blow your nose for 14 days after surgery.