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## TMJ Arthrocentesis/Arthroscopy After Surgery Instructions

### TMJ RELATED CONCERNS

- You may experience fluid in the ears. This can feel like “**swimmer’s ear**” and **can last for about 2–10 days** and will resolve on its own.
- You may experience some new clicking and popping in the joint.
- **Change position carefully** following the surgery as it is common to experience some dizziness. This will resolve on its own.
- **Limit the amount of talking for the first few days.**
- Any bite splints you wore prior to surgery can be worn following surgery.

### PHYSICAL THERAPY EXERCISES

- It may take several weeks for the return of normal jaw movements. Exercises are recommended to help reduce stiffness and improve range of motion.
- **Apply a warm wet face cloth for 15min before exercises.**
- **Gently massage the joint and lower face.**
- **Exercises should be performed 20x each 4x/day:**
  1. Vertical Opening: place tip of tongue on the roof of the mouth. Open and close the mouth slowly maintain a straight/midline jaw position.
  2. Lateral excursion: slide the bottom sideways to the right, then back to center. Repeat on the left.
  3. Protrusive/Gliding Motions: slide the bottom jaw forward and back.

### PAIN MANAGEMENT

- Alternate between an anti-inflammatory medication (ex. Ibuprofen, Naproxen) and a Tylenol based medication (ex. Tylenol or Tylenol #3). **Ibuprofen → 3hrs → Tylenol → 3hrs → Ibuprofen → etc.**

### DIET

- Diet is more limited for a short time after surgery. Some ideas include soups, pasta, noodles, eggs, pudding, ice cream, yogurt, juice, milkshakes, pancakes, or anything soft that you can tolerate.
  - **Soft Diet for 2 months post-op.**
- Slowly begin to increase your diet as tolerated after the 2-month mark. Drink plenty of fluids.
- **Avoid anything too crunchy** (ex. nuts, seeds) **or anything too chewy** (ex. bagels, steaks).

### BLEEDING/BRUISING

- Mild bleeding is expected, and it is normal to have a small amount of drainage from the incision site(s). **Use the gauze to apply pressure to the surgical sites** until the bleeding stops.
- Bruising may occur and varies between patients. It may travel down the neck and collect at the chest.

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## SWELLING

- Swelling is expected and will continue to peak up until the 48-hr point and can take 2 weeks to resolve.
- Use **ice packs 20 minutes ON, then 20 minutes OFF for the first 48 hours**. After 5 days you may begin to start using heat packs.

## HYGIENE

- Cleaning of the surgical sites is necessary. **You may wash the surgical sites with warm water and mild soap.**
- **DO NOT smoke or vape for 2 weeks following surgery.**

## NUMBNESS

- Numbness from the local anesthetic is temporary and will wear off within 24 hours. In this time, you may experience some difficulty closing your eye completely or smiling.

## RESUMING ACTIVITIES

- On average, most patients will take 1–2 days off from normal activity.
- Light physical exercise is permitted. **Strenuous exercise (ex. heavy lifting) should be avoided for 7 days.**

## GENERAL ANESTHETIC & IV SEDATION

- **Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or sign legal documents for 24 hours post-surgery. You should not be left alone for 24 hours following surgery.**
- Muscle pain and generalized soreness can occur following surgery and may last for 2-3 days.
- You may experience a sore throat and nose bleeds throughout the day. These are common if you had a general anesthetic.

## SIGNS OF INFECTION

- New onset swelling or pain
- Foul taste or odor in the mouth
- Fever
- Discharge from surgical sites

## POST-OP QUESTIONS AND URGENT CONCERNS

- Your well-being is our primary concern. Should you have any questions regarding your recovery, please contact our office.
- A doctor is on-call 24 hrs/day, 7 days/week for any serious post-op concerns (**bleeding, uncontrolled pain, signs of infection**). In the event of more urgent concerns, call our office at your earliest convenience. If you are calling after office hours or on the weekend, the answering machine will direct you to the oral surgeon on-call.
- If you are admitted to the hospital within 10 days from your procedure, please notify us immediately.
- **If you are having a medical emergency (chest pain, shortness of breath or uncontrolled bleeding), do not delay \* dial 911.**