
Orthognathic/Jaw Surgery After Surgery Instructions

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

- **You must remain on a non-chew/liquid diet for 6wks after surgery.** Examples of foods: anything pureed, soups, smoothies, oatmeal, yogurt. After 6wks you may slowly begin to upgrade your diet, with the guidance of your surgeon. **Avoid extremely hot or spicy foods.** Drink plenty of fluids.
- Utilize your syringes for feeding, medication administration and hydration.
- **Avoid sucking through a straw for 1 month.**

BLEEDING/BRUISING

- Minor bleeding is normal and expected, persisting on and off for the first week post-op.
- **Treat nosebleeds with pressure and gauze packing** – call the office if this persists.
- Bruising can be profound – it may travel down the neck and collect at the chest.

SWELLING

- Significant swelling is expected and will last for 2wks-4mo post-surgery. Swelling can cause stiffness and decreased opening. Use **ice packs 20 min ON, then 20 min OFF for the first 48hrs.**
- After 5 days you may begin to start using moist heat packs.
- Sleep with your head elevated for 1 week.

ORAL HYGIENE

- **Oral Hygiene is the #1 MOST IMPORTANT THING** during your post-operative course. Poor oral hygiene will lead to infection and wound dehiscence.
- **Rinse your mouth with the prescribed mouth rinse 3-4x/day,** (after eating and before bed).
- **The day following surgery you must begin to gently and thoroughly brush your teeth** (using a baby or child toothbrush).
- **DO NOT smoke cigarettes, marijuana or vape for the duration of your healing.**
- **Do not use a Water-PIK for 2wks after surgery.**

ELASTIC CARE

- **Once receiving clearance from your surgeon:**
 - **You may begin manipulating your own elastics.** Take a picture of the configuration of your elastics so you apply them back to the proper hooks/screws.
 - Elastics should be **changed every 48hrs and worn for 23hrs/day. Do not open aggressively** against your elastics.
- Call the office if your elastics have come off and you cannot reapply them.

STITCHES

- The sutures placed **will dissolve on their own**.
- Contact the clinic **immediately** if you notice the tissues have opened along the surgical site.

NUMBNESS

- **Generalized numbness is expected to the chin, lips, tongue, cheeks, and roof of mouth.** This will typically resolve but can last for many months.
- Take care not to bite your lips, cheeks, or gums.

INVISALIGN PATIENTS

- You should be wearing your retainers around the clock after surgery. When brushing your teeth, be sure to brush your retainers as well.
- Do not leave your trays out for more than 24hrs. Call the office if you cannot get them back in.

RESUMING ACTIVITIES

- Most patients will take 2-3 weeks off from normal activity. Light physical exercise is permitted.
- Strenuous exercise should be avoided for 6 weeks post-op. Avoid any contact sports in which you could get hit in the face for 2-3 months.

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.**