

IMMEDIATE SURGICAL DENTURES: Post-Operative Instructions and Information

- 1. Denture Wearing and Bleeding:** Apply constant firm biting pressure on the Denture(s) for 45 minutes after the surgery. This acts as a pressure dressing to help form a blood clot. You can expect slight oozing of blood for the first few days that will stain your saliva or spot a moistened cloth; this is normal. *If profuse excessive bleeding that pools in your mouth occurs at any time during the first few days, apply constant firm biting pressure on the Denture(s) for 45 minutes. If significant, excessive bleeding continues after this, contact the Clinic.*
- 2. Rest:** Limit activities for the first 24 hours after surgery. Sit in a semi-upright position and use pillows for support. Place a towel over your pillow to prevent blood from staining.
- 3. Swelling and Bruising:** Normal after surgery, and will vary with the person and type of surgery. Apply ice to the jaw and cheek area during the first 24 hours to reduce swelling, this is important. Use the ice packs 15 minutes on/15 minutes off, and then repeat. After the first 24 hours, ice will not affect swelling but may reduce pain. Swelling will reach a maximum about 48-72 hours after surgery. Bruising will resolve over a period of days.
- 4. Infection, Fever and Antibiotics:** Most healthy patients have a 2-3% risk of developing infection after surgery. If the doctor felt you were at increased risk of infection because of your general health or the type of surgery, you will be placed on antibiotic medication. It is important that you follow directions on the label and take the medication until finished. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medication and contact the Clinic immediately. It is a normal reaction to surgery to develop a slight elevation in temperature for 24-48 hours after surgery. If the fever persists or is highly elevated and you feel generally fatigued, please contact the Clinic. You will be at the greatest risk of infection 3 days after surgery. Contact the Clinic if pain develops around the healing socket.
- 5. Osteomyelitis and Osteonecrosis:** In very rare cases, an infection called osteomyelitis or osteonecrosis can develop that will result in failure of the surgical site to heal with prolonged pain, exposed bone, and drainage. If this develops, another X-ray and surgical procedure is necessary, which would involve a fee. Contact the Clinic if healing seems very delayed and/or if pain develops around the healing socket.
- 6. Bone fragments & Sharp ridges:** There may be small pieces of bone between the sockets that lose blood supply, become dislodged and move to the surface of the socket; this is usually painless and a common part of healing. Development of a sharp edge of the socket is also common after surgical extractions. In some cases another X-ray and surgical procedure is necessary to remove the bone fragment or to smooth the bone, which would involve a fee. Contact the Clinic if pain develops around the healing socket.
- 7. Surgical Site Pain and Pain Reliever Instructions:** Pain normally reaches a peak 48-72 hours after surgery. If the doctor anticipates you will have only minor pain, take over-the-counter Tylenol or Advil. Avoid aspirin because it interferes with blood clotting. Follow the directions on the bottle of any prescribed medication. The pain medication may make you drowsy, so you should not drive a car or perform important tasks. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medication and contact the Clinic immediately.
- 8. Muscle Pain:** It is common to have swelling in the muscles after surgery and this will resolve with time. Starting 3 days after surgery you can begin application of moist heat 4-6 times daily to the jaw muscles to help resolve muscle pain. Do not begin sooner than 3 days after surgery or you can risk developing an infection.
- 9. Nausea:** Usually due to swallowing a small amount of blood with the surgery. Some medications can also cause nausea. A small amount of carbonated drink every 1 hour will usually relieve this feeling. If nausea continues, contact the Clinic.
- 10. Diet:** Soft foods and liquids high in vitamins and protein are recommended. Avoid nuts, popcorn, and crunchy or spicy foods that can irritate the surgical site.
- 11. Denture and Oral Hygiene:** You should wear your Denture(s) non-stop for 24 hours. Only after 24 hours should you begin to rinse your mouth. Remove the Denture(s) and rinse gently with a solution of 1 teaspoon of salt in a warm glass of water 5 or 6 times daily. Continue this for 7 days after surgery. You should brush your teeth normally and clean food debris from the surgery area with a moist cotton swab or moist cloth. Wear the Denture(s) at night for the first 2 nights, and then start removing the Denture(s) at night.
- 12. Smoking:** Can delay healing and increase the risk of infection and should be avoided or greatly reduced for 48 hours.
- 13. Dry Socket:** This is very rare under a Denture. It is significant sharp pain in the jaw and ear due to partial or complete loss of the blood clot that occurs 1-5 days after the surgery. Avoid vigorous rinsing, spitting, smoking and drinking through a straw for the first few days because these will disturb the blood clot. Keep the area very clean with warm salt water rinses and a moist cotton swab to remove food debris. If dry socket develops, contact the Clinic.
- 14. Antibiotics (females):** Will inactivate most birth control medication; use other methods of contraception until your next menstrual cycle.
- 15. Sutures:** You will be advised if sutures have been placed over the surgical site. If they are not the type that dissolves they will be removed at your follow-up visit. Dissolving sutures begin to loosen within 3-5 days.
- 16. Sedation:** If you were sedated it is important for someone to stay with you until you have recovered from the effects of the medications.