

# Post-Operative Instructions Following Oral Surgery



## Pain

- There should be no pain immediately after the operation due to the local anaesthetic used. This should last for 2-3 hours before sensation returns slowly and care should be taken to avoid biting the lip or tongue during this time.
- Pain tends to be worse on the 2nd or 3rd day but gradually improves over a period of 7-10 days.
- Simple painkillers such as Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen should ease the pain, and should be taken regularly in the first few days if required. If you are asthmatic, you may need to avoid taking Ibuprofen as it may worsen your asthma.
- A painful condition called "dry socket" may develop after extractions, particularly if they are difficult. Typically the pain will be getting worse rather than better after a few days. It is easily treated by washing and dressing the socket but you will need to attend the department so please contact us if you think this has developed. It will settle without treatment but can take a couple of weeks.

## Swelling

- This is common after surgery has been carried out in the jaw, and is not necessarily a sign of infection requiring antibiotics.
- The swelling reaches its maximum 2-3 days after surgery.

- The swelling should resolve 7-10 days after surgery.
- Bruising of the face occasionally occurs and can take up to 2 weeks to resolve.

## Bleeding

- This should be minimal by the time you leave the surgery/hospital.
- Blood stained saliva is to be expected for 24-48 hours after the operation.
- Do not rinse the mouth for the first day. Avoid exercise that may increase blood pressure, and avoid alcohol for the first 24 hours as these may disturb the blood clot and cause bleeding.
- If persistent bleeding occurs, roll up a piece of damp gauze and place it over the wound and bite firmly over a period of at least 15 minutes.

## Oral Hygiene

- The next day, use a hot salt-water mouth bath. The water should be as warm as possible and a spoonful of salt added. Take a mouthful and hold it still for a couple of minutes before spitting out. Repeat 4 times daily. This will help prevent infection.
- Keep your teeth clean with gentle tooth brushing if possible. A tooth brush can be softened under a hot tap.
- Chlorhexidine (Corsodyl) mouthwash will help reduce plaque while tooth brushing is difficult.

## Smoking

- Avoid smoking as long as possible after treatment. Smoking reduces the rate of healing and increase the risk of a condition known as dry socket, which can be very painful.

## Diet

- Your mouth opening may be restricted for about a week.
- Eating semi- solid food should be possible.
- Use your own discretion and gradually start eating normally according to your own pace.



