

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER WISDOM TEETH REMOVAL

Return home and relax today. **If you have had intravenous sedation**, you will feel groggy for up to 24 hours. It is critical that you do not drive, operate hazardous machinery, make critical decisions, or consume alcohol or drugs with sedative properties during this period.

Medications:

- Take the prescribed and/or recommended pain medication before the freezing wears off.
- Take pain medications regularly for the first couple of days, to stay ahead of the pain. Continue to take your pain medications as required to manage the pain.
- If antibiotics were prescribed, take them until they are finished. Eat yogurt and/or take probiotics while taking antibiotics, and for 3-4 days after to maintain and restore good intestinal bacteria.
- All medications should be taken after eating to help prevent nausea. If any of your medications cause you significant nausea despite being taken with food, please call our office.

Bleeding:

A moderate amount of bleeding or oozing can be expected during the first 2-3 days after surgery. To control bleeding, fold dampened gauze and place directly **behind** the last molar teeth. Bite gently to apply **firm pressure**. If the gauze is between your teeth and not behind the molar teeth, the gauze will not be effective. Change the gauze every 30-45 minutes until the bleeding has slowed and gauze is coming out pink or almost white. **Always remove gauze before sleeping, drinking, or eating.** If you don't have gauze, use a wet black tea bag (tannins in black tea aid in blood clotting).

Swelling:

- Swelling is common and usually peaks 3 days after the surgery. Ice packs help minimize swelling and should be applied preventatively during the first 2-3 days after surgery. Ice packs must be wrapped in a thin cloth and applied on the outside of the jaw or cheeks near the surgical site, **20 minutes 'on' and 20 minutes 'off'**.
- Bruising can also occur and should reduce as the swelling dissipates. Applying a moist hot towel starting 4-5 days post-surgery will help with resolving the bruising.
- Sleeping with your head elevated at about 45 degrees for the first 2-3 days after the surgery can also be helpful to reduce swelling.

Rinsing & Brushing:

- Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth for **24hrs after surgery** as it will delay the healing process.
- After 24 hours, **brush all your teeth** using a soft toothbrush and toothpaste, including the back teeth by where the teeth were extracted. Just be gentle to not disturb the surgical site. At this time, you may also begin to rinse your mouth. If a mouth rinse was prescribed, please follow instructions on the bottle. Otherwise, you may rinse with 1/2 tsp of salt dissolved in a glass of warm water.
- **Do not swish** when rinsing your mouth; instead, slightly lower, and gently move your head side to side.
- **Do not spit out the water**, but let it drip out into the sink. Use this brushing and rinsing method for the next 1-2 weeks.

Monojet Syringe:

- If you have had lower wisdom teeth extracted, you may have been provided with a syringe to flush food debris out of the lower sockets. If this is the case, start using it on the fourth day after surgery, after meals and at bedtime. To use, fill the syringe with warm salt water, then place it directly over the surgical sites/sockets and slowly flush the area. Continue to use at least daily for the next 6 - 8 weeks or until the holes have healed over.

Stitches:

Stitches (if present) may dissolve, come loose, or fall out in approximately 2-7 days. If there is no heavy, continuous bleeding this is not a cause for concern.

Nutrition:

While lips and/or tongue are numb, do not bite them. During the first 24 hours following the surgery, **avoid hot fluids** (tea, coffee, hot soup) as they may increase bleeding and pain. Limit yourself to a soft diet such as yogurt, apple sauce, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, and overcooked pasta for the next 5-7 days. Drink plenty of fluids, but **do not use straws** for the next 7 days.

Avoid foods that break down into hard crunchy bits such as chips, popcorn, whole grain breads, seeds, nuts, and raw vegetables. These foods are easily lodged in the surgical site, and are very difficult to rinse out, which may cause an infection. Avoiding these foods for 6 weeks is advised.

Activities:

It is not advisable to go to the gym, play sports, or lift heavy objects until 5 days after your surgery, as it may cause bleeding.

Smoking:

Smoking **seriously slows the healing process and increases the risk of infection** in your mouth. Avoid smoking during the first 5-7 days following the surgery. Reduce smoking as much as possible over the coming weeks for proper healing.

Dry Socket:

A throbbing or sharp shooting pain along the jawline, 4 days or more after surgery may indicate the development of an incomplete healing or "dry socket". Avoiding any type of suction in your mouth reduces the risk of developing dry socket (don't use straws, don't smoke, or vape, don't vigorously swish or spit).

Temporary numbness or tingling in the lip or tongue:

Due to the position of many impacted teeth, sensory nerves supplying the lip or tongue are occasionally involved during surgery. Numbness or tingling or an altered sensation in the lower lip and/or tongue can occur requiring several weeks, months or even up to 2 years for normal function to return.

Post-operative visit:

Not all procedures will require a post-operative visit. However, if you have any concerns in the coming days to weeks, call the office and we can book you an appointment to come back as needed.

When to call the office:

Feel free to call our office with any questions. Also reach out if you have:

- Heavy, bright red bleeding you have been unable to control with 30+ minutes firm pressure.
- Pain that is not tolerable after taking all medications prescribed/recommended and applying ice.
- Swelling that does not reduce or increases after 5 days. This could indicate an infection, and may be accompanied by pus, a bad taste or smell, or increasing pain.

Please direct any minor or non-urgent concerns to the office during regular office hours. Should any urgent symptoms occur when the office is closed, please call your surgeon on their emergency number found on the first page. Whether dissolvable or non-dissolvable, **never attempt to remove a stitch on your own.**

Emergency Phone Number

Dr. Amin Alibhai
613-518-0657