



MIT Medical

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MOUTH CARE FOLLOWING THE REMOVAL OF WISDOM TEETH

(Your surgeon and assistant will go over post operative care with you. These written instructions are provided so that you can review this information at home.)

Bleeding

Some oozing of blood is anticipated after removal of wisdom teeth. Blood-tinged saliva may be evident for as long as 24 hours.

Please bite for 20 to 30 minutes on the gauze that was placed in your mouth at the end of surgery. Thereafter, only replace the gauze if there is persistent bleeding. Mild oozing does not require the use of gauze. While oozing persists, avoid rinsing your mouth as this may cause bleeding to continue. Vigorous exercise also may increase bleeding by elevating blood pressure. It is prudent to avoid strenuous activity for the first 24 hour after surgery. Some patients exhibit bruising (purple or yellow discoloration) several days after surgery. This may be unsightly but is not worrisome as a rule.

If bleeding seems excessive in amount or duration do not hesitate to call your oral surgeon or the dental service.

Pain

The amount of pain associated with the removal of wisdom teeth varies from person to person and relates to the difficulty of the surgery. Even with fairly difficult impactions, most patients benefit greatly by taking a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory pain medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). (The use of Aspirin is not recommended because of its irreversible effect on platelets which can contribute to prolonged bleeding.) Your surgeon will have indicated how much medication to take. It is best to start taking the pain medication BEFORE the local anesthetic wears off so that you don't have to wait for the medication to take effect. If appropriate, your surgeon will have provided a prescription pain medication to use if an over-the-counter non-steroidal medication is not sufficient.

If you have question about your level of discomfort or about the use of medication, do not hesitate to call.

Swelling

Some swelling is to be anticipated after the removal of impacted teeth, especially lower wisdom teeth. The application of ice packs to the cheek area will help limit swelling during the first 24 hours after surgery. Thereafter, the use of local heat will help the swelling resolve.

☐ **Hygiene**

Starting the morning after surgery or after all bleeding has ceased, use warm saline rinses after meals. Mix ½ teaspoon of table salt in a glass of warm tap water. Do not attempt to use a tooth brush in the area of surgery but brushing in other regions of the mouth is OK.

☐ **Diet**

Once the initial bleeding has stopped, you may eat normally. It is best to avoid foods with a lot of particulate debris (like nuts or popcorn, for example) that might get caught in an extraction site. For the first day or so, pain and jaw stiffness may necessitate a soft-solid and liquid diet.

☐ **Sutures**

The sutures placed during your surgery are resorbable. They soften and fall out several days to a week after surgery. If persistent sutures prove to be annoying, they can be removed at the check-up visit.

☐ **Things to look out for.**

Naturally, we hope your recovery from surgery will be uneventful, however the following findings should be discussed with your surgeon to determine the appropriate level of concern:

- ! Increasing levels of pain or swelling
- ! Elevation of temperature
- ! Numbness in the lip or tongue
- ! gastrointestinal upset
- ! A rash or itching of the skin of the trunk or extremities

Basically, any occurrence that seems out of the ordinary is grounds for a call to get advice or reassurance.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL YOUR SURGEON OR THE DENTAL SERVICE FOR ANY PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO YOUR SURGERY.