

GENERAL CONCERNS

PAIN - This can usually be controlled by taking over the counter pain relievers. If your faculty advisor prescribes stronger medication, take it strictly as directed. Pain medication should be started well before the local anesthetic has worn off. The application of an ice pack to the affected area may help to reduce pain and swelling; use 15 minutes on, 5 minutes off for the first few hours. Persistent pain, continuing after 72 hours, may indicate that medicated dressings are required.

BLEEDING - Some bleeding can be expected. The saliva may be blood tinged for 24-48 hours. If bleeding persists, it can be controlled with firm pressure on a sterile gauze pack placed over the wound for 20 minutes. Repeat, as necessary. It is important that the pack be placed directly over the bleeding site and not over adjacent teeth. It must be bulky enough to prevent the upper and lower teeth from meeting when biting firmly. Protruding, liver-like clots, if present, should be removed before placement of the gauze pack.

SWELLING - This is not uncommon and may be accompanied by skin discoloration. These are normal post operative after effects, as is inability to open the mouth fully. (see note on use of ice)

ORAL HYGIENE - This is imperative. Brush and floss all areas starting the next day except for the operative site. Rinsing with tap water or commercial flavored mouthwash should commence on the first post-op day and continue until the area has healed. Keep stitches clean. They should be removed in 5-7 days.

SMOKING - We absolutely do not condone the use of tobacco in any form. However we cannot expect patients to start a smoking cessation program on the day of an oral surgical procedure.

ANTIBIOTICS - Are given to treat existing infection and may be given prophylactically to prevent future infection. The full course of antibiotic therapy must be completed. In general, an antibiotic is most effective when taken one hour before meals or two hours after. It may cause GI upset and allergy (rash, hives). Contact the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department if this is the case.

DIET - Soft, bland foods (ex. yogurt, jello, soup, mashed potatoes) are recommended. Avoid seeds, pits, etc, which could become lodged in healing areas. Chew on the opposite side from the operate area.

MEDICATIONS - Continue taking your normal medications unless otherwise directed.