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Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
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Warning: antibiotics have been reported to decrease the effectiveness of oral contraceptives. To prevent pregnancy, alternative forms of birth control must be used for one month after use of an antibiotic.

Dr. Steele will prescribe a pain medication, anti-nausea medication and antibiotic. Please fill these prescriptions prior to surgery. *Your medications have been prescribed for specific purposes and should only be used as directed. Pain medications inhibit reflexes, therefore DO NOT drive or operate machinery while taking these medications. Do not use alcohol while taking any prescribed medications. If antibiotics are prescribed, be sure to finish all doses, even if you are feeling well.*

When to call Dr. Steele

- Nausea that lasts for more than 6 hours
- Bleeding that persists more than 24 hours following surgery
- Temperature taken under the arm is over 100.5°F
- Throbbing jaw and ear pain more than 3 days after surgery.

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Things to avoid

- Smoking
- Sucking on straws for 7 days
- Spitting (wipe blood from lips with a tissue as needed)
- Vigorous rinsing (mild rinsing is acceptable)
- Hot liquids (cold and lukewarm are acceptable)
- Lying flat (elevate head above the heart)
- Driving within 24 hours of surgery
- Swimming or hot tubs for 7 days

When you get home

- ❑ Remove gauze from the surgical site
- ❑ Take first dosage of antibiotics
- ❑ Take 600 mg (3 tablets/capsules) of ibuprofen (Motrin®/Advil®).
- ❑ Eat cold, soft foods by spoon such as ice cream, milk shake, fruit smoothies, etc. It is important to eat when taking medications.
- ❑ Replace fresh gauze at the surgical site as directed.
- ❑ Apply icepack to reduce swelling.
- ❑ Rest with head elevated. Patient should be closely monitored for the first 5 to 6 hours.

First 4 hours

- ❑ Change gauze every hour for the next 4 hours. Do not change more often than every 60 minutes.
- ❑ Continue to apply ice pack alternating 30 minutes on/30 minutes off.

Numbness will begin to subside approximately 4-8 hours after surgery. It is important to begin pain medication **before** numbness wears off.

Bleeding should subside by hour 4 and gauze packing will no longer be required. If bleeding continues, please see **special instructions: bleeding**.

Hours 4-24

- ❑ Take 1st dose of prescription pain medication as numbness begins to subside.
- ❑ Take 1 Phenergan (if prescribed) with each pain pill to prevent nausea and vomiting. If nausea persists, see **special instructions: nausea**.
- ❑ Take two ibuprofen (400 mg) as instructed to reduce inflammation. **DO NOT TAKE ADDITIONAL OVER-THE-COUNTER ACETAMINOPHEN PRODUCTS (Tylenol®) other than that which was prescribed.**
- ❑ Take antibiotic medication as directed (3 times/day)
- ❑ Eat a soft lukewarm diet of foods such as scrambled eggs, mashed/baked potatoes, soup, pasta, cream of wheat, etc. It is important to eat while taking prescribed medications.
- ❑ Mouth may still be numb. Avoid hot liquids or food to prevent burns and hard, crisp foods to prevent biting cheeks or tongue.
- ❑ Apply icepack alternating 30 minutes on/30 minutes off.
- ❑ Do not brush teeth or rinse mouth vigorously for the first 24 hours after surgery.
- ❑ Avoid any physical exertion or exercise the day of surgery. Rest and good nutrition will increase healing abilities.

On the road to recovery

Diet

A nutritious diet will speed the healing process. Avoid crisp, hard food for the first several days and begin reintroducing regular food, as tolerated, around day 5.

Oral Hygiene

Use a soft toothbrush and rinse gently with warm salt water (½ tsp. salt and 8 oz. water) after meals and before bedtime. If you have had your wisdom teeth removed, starting on the 5th day after surgery, fill an irrigation syringe with warm water and flush out any debris that may be trapped in the extraction sites.

Activities

Most patients may resume relatively normal activities 3-5 days after surgery, but strenuous exercise such as swimming, soccer, football or skiing should be avoided for at least one week or until doctor's release.

Post-Operative Follow-Up Visit

A follow-up visit will be scheduled approximately 7 days after your surgery to examine the extraction site(s) and to confirm that the patient may resume normal activity.

Special Instructions

Bleeding Bleeding is to be expected for 12-24 hours following oral surgery. After the 4th hour, no gauze should be needed. If bleeding persists, place ice pack to the area, lie down with head slightly elevated, place a doubled gauze pad in the area and bite down constantly for the next hour. If the bleeding continues, place a moistened tea bag in in the surgical area for one hour. Apply firm pressure to keep pads from becoming dislodged which may cause gagging or choking. We recommend removal of the gauze pads prior to eating, sleeping or when bleeding has subsided.

Nausea and Vomiting Most nausea is caused by the narcotic pain medication, especially if taken on an empty stomach. The anesthetic medication can also cause nausea. Swallowing blood does not cause nausea. If nausea occurs, stop the narcotic pain medications; remain at rest in a quiet dark room. A cold towel applied to the neck and forehead may help. Small sips of tea, carbonated beverages or sports drinks taken slowly may help to calm the stomach. If nausea persists longer than 4-6 hours, call Dr. Steele.

Temperature Any time surgery is performed in the mouth there can be an elevation in body temperature. If you feel you have an elevated temperature, measure it under your arm. If temperature is over 100.5°F, please call Dr. Steele.

Swelling Ice is helpful only for the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Moist heat can then be used to relieve residual swelling. Wet a hand towel with warm water and place on the face over the surgery area, it may be rewarmed in the microwave for 30 seconds. Swelling may persist for 5-7 days following surgery.

Venipuncture The needle being placed into the vein or the medications used for sedation may sometimes cause an inflammation of the vein called phlebitis. This is a firm tenderness of the vein that usually resolves without treatment. If this arises, please call our office.

Dry Socket This complication is seen in about 5% of patients and unfortunately cannot be predicted or prevented. The blood clot that forms in the extraction site may be dislodged or prematurely dissolve. This may occur from the 3rd to 8th day after surgery and typically causes throbbing pain in the jaw, which radiates to the ear. Should this occur, please contact our office. Dr. Steele will place a medicated dressing in the extraction socket to control the discomfort. Recovery can take as long as 7-10 days.