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**EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER: (801) 372-1416**

## Postoperative Instructions

### Home Care

1. **Bite on gauze firmly for about 2 hours**, changing every 20 minutes or when gauze gets saturated. The main bleeding will usually last 2-6 hours, but don't be alarmed if bleeding continues. You can expect slight oozing for up to 24 - 48 hours. When resting today, keep your head slightly elevated using two pillows. Lying down flat or trying to get up too soon will cause more bleeding and swelling.
2. **Apply ice packs to areas of surgery for the first 48 - 72 hours following surgery.** On the third to fifth days following surgery, apply heat to the swollen areas as often and as long as possible until swelling disappears. Either moist or dry heat will help.
3. **Do not rinse the mouth for 24 hours.** After 24 hours you may start rinsing with warm salt-water rinses. Use lukewarm water. Rinse 10 to 15 times a day. Do this every day until healing is complete. **DO NOT SWISH!** Fill your mouth with water and turn your head from side to side. Allow the water to fall into the sink - do not spit aggressively. (Follow this procedure for the first seven days).
4. **The day of surgery, a soft/liquid diet is best, drinking as many fluids as possible.** Tomorrow, start a soft diet and begin chewing food when you feel you are able without discomfort. Be sure to rinse gently after each meal (as directed in #3). The sooner you are back to a normal diet, the faster you will recover.

Suggested Foods for first 24 - 72 hours:

Smoothies (w/o seeds)	Mashed Potatoes	Water
Liquid Nutrition Drinks	Soup	Water
Yogurt	Apple Sauce	Water
Pudding	Popsicles	Water
Jello	Ice Cream	Water

5. **Pick up the prescriptions on your way home or as soon as possible.** Take the tablets upon arriving home,, Follow the instructions given on the reverse side of this page.

*Please follow directions on YOUR PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE*

## Possible Postoperative Complications and Solutions

In case of extreme pain, uncontrollable bleeding, or any unusual disturbances, feel free to telephone our emergency number. However, some of the most common postoperative problems can be easily dealt with at home.

- ✓ **Bleeding will not stop...**See #1 above. Be sure that gauze, towels, or something absorbent is placed over the surgical site and bite down firmly. Maintain for 15 minutes, change gauze and repeat. If continuous bleeding does not stop within 2 hours, please call the emergency number.
- ✓ **Uncontrolled pain...**Wisdom Tooth Removal is a complex surgery involving skin, muscle, bone and nerves. Postoperative pain and discomfort are normal and part of recovery. Your pain medication will help relieve post-operative pain. Use it as directed. Please take your pain medications as indicated and get plenty of rest. If pain spikes after day three, please call the emergency number.
- ✓ **Vomiting...**Unfortunately, vomiting can be a side effect of IV anesthesia. However, it does very little to harm the surgical site. Vomiting will normally cause the sockets to begin to bleed. Gently rinse your mouth and follow the instruction noted above under "bleeding will not stop..."

## Dry Socket

Dry Socket is a common problem following wisdom teeth removal. Although it can happen with any tooth extraction, it is commonly seen after removal of lower wisdom teeth. The problem arises because the normal blood clot that first forms in the extraction socket is subsequently lost, leaving the socket empty or “dry.” Exposed nerve endings inside the socket can cause pain felt in the jaws, the adjacent teeth, the ear (earache), and/or the temple (headache).

There is no known way to prevent Dry Socket, although the prescribed antibiotic gives the best chance.


The cause of Dry Socket is the patient’s poor circulation, i.e. lack of good blood supply, to the extraction site(s). Most people do not have adequate circulation to prevent Dry Sockets in the lower wisdom teeth area; if you had lower wisdom teeth out, it is likely you will get Dry Socket, although a fortunate few get by without it. Other parts of the jaw, especially the upper jaw, have much better circulation and rarely get Dry Socket. Patients who smoke are more at risk of getting Dry Socket because all regions of their body have less circulation, i.e. the nicotine has already cause generalized constriction or narrowing of the blood vessels.

Pain that increases three days after tooth extraction and that typically becomes severe and unrelenting is the best sign of dry socket. If you experience this type of pain, **please call our emergency number immediately.**

## How to get the most out of your Pain Medication/Antibiotic

- ✓ Antibiotics should be taken with water or food at breakfast, lunch, dinner and before bed (1 tablet each).
- ✓ Always take medication with a cup of liquid or a serving of food. **DO NOT TAKE MEDICATION ON AN EMPTY STOMACH!**
- ✓ To avoid nausea while taking Lortab/Percocet: Remain in a reclined position, do not walk around except to go to the bathroom or when absolutely necessary.
- ✓ During the first night or two, wake the patient every three hours for pain medication. If the patient is allowed to go without pain medication and awakes in pain, it will be very difficult to make the patient comfortable again.
- ✓ Stay on the schedule outlined below

Lortab/Percocet\*\* (1 or 2 tablets)  
*Wait three (3) hours*  
 Ibuprofen 800mg (1 tablet)  
*Wait three (3) hours*  
**REPEAT**



TIME	MEDICATION INSTRUCTIONS
	Surgery Completed
	First Lortab/Percocet within 2 hours of surgery
	Ibuprofen 800mg (1 tablet)
	Lortab/Percocet (1 - 2 tablets)
	Ibuprofen 800mg (1 tablet)
	Lortab/Percocet (1 - 2 tablets)
	Ibuprofen 800mg (1 tablet)
	Lortab/Percocet (1 - 2 tablets)
	Ibuprofen 800mg (1 tablet)
	Lortab/Percocet (1 - 2 tablets)
	Ibuprofen 800mg (1 tablet)
	CONTINUE AS LONG AS NECESSARY

## Infection or Swelling after 7 days

\*\* Lortab/Percocet may be replaced with 1000mg Tylenol. In patients who do not tolerate Lortab/Percocet.

Swelling or pain in the area of the extractions that begins between 10 days after surgery and 12 months after surgery is not uncommon. **Call our emergency number immediately** if swelling, pus or pain return at any time in the next 12 months. Treatment will be completed in our office at no additional charge to you.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date