

Periodontal Specialists of Hawaii

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POST SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

Proper care of the mouth following dental surgical procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing and recovery of the surgical area. PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW CAREFULLY.

1. **DO NOT RINSE OR SPIT FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.** This is important to control bleeding and preserve the blood clots. Tomorrow you may begin to rinse gently. The use of over the counter mouth rinse during the healing period is *not recommended*; use **only** the mouthrinse that was prescribed.
2. **BLEEDING.** After surgery some light bleeding or oozing is to be expected. If persistent bleeding occurs, place one or two folded gauze pads or a tea bag over the bleeding area and bite down firmly for 30 minutes. Repeat several times if necessary, but if bleeding persists or becomes a constant flow that pressure does not stop, call us immediately.
3. **SWELLING.** Slight swelling may occur, although rare. As a precaution, you may gently apply ice packs to the area for 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off. Do not use ice after the first 24 hours.
4. **MEDICATION.**
 - Pain medication:** Most patients feel little or no discomfort following surgery; however, it is normal to experience some minor discomfort for a day or two. This is best resolved with either ibuprophen (motrin/advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) products.
 - Antibiotics:** If medications have been prescribed take as instructed until **all** of the antibiotics are gone (Take with Large meal). **Birth control pills are ineffective when taking antibiotics.**
 - Mouthrinse:** If chlorhexidine (Peridex/Perioguard) mouthrinse has been prescribed, rinse twice a day for 30 seconds, and **then do not eat or drink for 1 hour.** We recommend you rinse after you have breakfast or coffee in the morning and just before bed at night. ***Mouth rinse may stain your teeth & tongue but it is not usually permanent and in most cases can be polished off by your hygienist. Tongue stain naturally wears off after discontinuing mouth rinse use.***
5. **FOOD.** A soft diet is advisable during the first 2 weeks. Adequate food and fluid intake following surgery and extractions are most important. Your regular diet may be too hard and could cause bleeding and displacement of the sutured gum tissue; therefore, you may supplement your diet with instant breakfast or nutrition drinks. Soft foods such as pasta, rice, potatoes, ground beef, fish and steamed/microwaved vegetables are more comfortably eaten. Avoid hard crunchy and chewy foods (raw vegetables, nuts, popcorn, and crusty bread).
6. **AVOID.** All strenuous activity to include swimming or surfing for 7 days. Do not pick at the surgical area. Try to avoid creating negative pressure in the mouth that could dislodge blood clots (sneezing, coughing, smoking, using a straw, kissing, etc.) Also avoid alcohol, carbonated beverages, high citric acid fruits and drinks (orange & grapefruit juice) and spicy, hot food for 7 days.
7. **SUTURES.** Stitches are used to hold the gum tissue in proper position for ideal healing. The sutures are resorbable and will fall out in approximately 7-14 days. Try to not disturb the sutures with your tongue or toothbrush since displacement can impair or delay healing.
8. **ORAL HYGIENE.** It is important to maintain a normal level of oral hygiene in the non-operated areas. The surgical site can be **gently** cleaned by rinsing and using a fluoride toothpaste and a very soft toothbrush, but avoid touching the gums or sutures. *Do not use oral irrigators, electric toothbrushes or try to clean between the teeth with floss or toothpicks for 6 weeks unless otherwise directed.*
9. **ALLERGIC REACTIONS.** For generalized rash, itching, difficulty swallowing, etc., call immediately. Gastrointestinal disturbances, such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, flatulence and heartburn are not allergic reactions, but side effects of some medications. If you experience these side effects, try taking the antibiotics with a heavy meal. If this condition persists and becomes uncomfortable, discontinue the medication and contact us at 808-955-1506.