



Dr. Ehlie Bruno
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon

5342 South Archer Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60632
(773) 692-5928

1610 W. Fullerton Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60614
(773) 692-4171

33 N. Dearborn St. #2400
Chicago, Illinois 60602
(773) 906-7255

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Please read these instructions carefully. Each person may have a different experience following oral surgery, so not all of these instructions may apply. Our goal is to make you as comfortable as possible during your recovery. Please call our office with any questions you may have. While rare following oral surgery, in the event of an emergency, please call 911 or report to your nearest emergency room.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SURGERY:

BLEEDING:

Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change the gauze for the first 30 minutes following surgery unless saturated or the bleeding is not controlled. If active bleeding persists after 30 minutes, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 20-30 minutes. The gauze may be changed as necessary every 20 minutes. You may dampen the gauze with water for more comfortable positioning. Remove the gauze from your mouth when eating or sleeping.

Bleeding should never be severe or uncontrolled. This may indicate the gauze is positioned between the teeth rather than exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning fresh gauze and using a mirror to ensure correct positioning. If bleeding persists, you may substitute a tea bag (soaked in room temperature tap water and squeezed damp-dry) for an additional 20-30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

OOZING:

Intermittent bleeding or oozing from the site is normal for 1-2 days following a surgical procedure. It may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the surgical areas and biting down firmly for 20-30 minutes. If you have concerns, please call our office.

SWELLING:

Often there may be swelling after oral surgery at the surgery site and the outside of the face. Swelling can be minimized by using a cold pack or ice pack, wrapped in a towel, and applied to your face or cheek adjacent to the surgical area. Please apply ice for twenty minutes to the affected area, then remove for twenty minutes, repeating on and off during the first 24 hours after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed. After 24 hours, it is usually best to switch from ice to heat application to the same area.

PAIN:

In most cases, discomfort after oral surgery is usually moderate in nature and lasts a few days. Our goal is to keep you as comfortable as possible while you recover. We will discuss appropriate expectations and pain management with you before the procedure.

It is typically recommended to take appropriate pain medication when you return home following the surgery, before the local anesthesia (numbing) wears off. It is common for pain to increase the first 24 hours after the procedure and then dissipate over the next several days. Your post-operative pain management regimen will be tailored specifically to you based on the procedure performed and your medical history.

Certain over-the-counter medications may be more effective in treating your pain and generally have less side effects than prescription medication. Please be aware pain medications, both over-the-counter and prescription, have potential side effects. You cannot consume alcohol, drive, or operate heavy machinery while you are taking prescription pain medication. If you remain uncomfortable or have any questions, please contact our office.

NAUSEA:

In the event of nausea and/or vomiting following surgery, do not take anything by mouth for one hour including medication. Begin to slowly sip tea or ginger ale over a 15-minute period. When the nausea subsides, you may slowly resume solid foods and medication. Please remember to take medication with food and water. Please contact our office if you have nausea lasting greater than 3 hours or persistent vomiting.

DIET:

Please consume any nourishing, soft food that can be eaten with comfort. It is wise to avoid extremely hot or spicy foods for the first 48 hours. Patients may be more comfortable with bland liquids or pureed foods (soup, pudding, yogurt, protein shakes, etc.) for the first 1-2 days, but it is not required. Avoid sharp, hard, crunchy foods like chips, nuts, seeds, popcorn, granola, etc. that may get lodged in the surgical areas. Avoid using drinking straws. Over the next several days, you can progress to solid foods at your own pace. It is important not to skip meals. If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better and generally recover faster.

If you have diabetes, please make sure to discuss your post-operative diet with your surgeon and be prepared to check your blood sugar levels more frequently after your procedure. Follow all instructions for diabetes management from both your surgeon and your treating physician.

BRUSHING TEETH & MOUTH RINSES:

Please carefully brush and floss your teeth at nighttime, with the exception of the surgical site. Please avoid brushing the surgical site or disrupting the area. Soreness and swelling may not permit thorough brushing of all teeth, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

Please avoid all mouth rinses or aggressive swishing of liquids for 24 hours after your procedure. If you have been prescribed a mouth rinse, please take as directed starting 24 hours after your procedure. Alternatively, warm salt water rinses may be initiated 24 hours after your procedure. Use 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 oz. glass of lukewarm water. Gently rinse your mouth with this solution, 2-3 times daily, for the next several days.

THE FIRST WEEK AFTER SURGERY:

HEAT APPLICATION:

Please discontinue ice application after 24 hours. Apply warm compresses to the skin overlying areas of swelling (hot water bottles, moist hot towels, or a heating pad) for 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off, to help soothe any tender areas.

EXERCISE & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

You may require time off from heavy exercise and sporting activities. Resuming these activities immediately following surgery may increase bleeding and swelling. Additionally, these activities could delay wound healing and potentially affect your surgical results. Light ambulatory activity is generally appropriate for the first several days after your procedure. Please discuss with your surgeon when it may be appropriate to resume more intensive physical activity.

SHARP EDGES:

If you feel sharp edges in the surgical areas with your tongue, it may be the bony walls which originally supported the teeth or suture material (stitches). Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the first week or two after surgery, especially if you had a tooth extraction or bone grafting procedure. Please call our office with any concerns.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Please avoid smoking for two weeks after surgery, as smoking significantly delays wound healing and increases the risk of post-operative complications. It is best to avoid alcohol for at least one week following the procedure, as alcohol can interact with post-operative medications and promote bleeding.
- Please take all medication as directed and prescribed. If you have been prescribed an antibiotic, please make sure to finish the entire prescription, even if you are feeling better. Discontinue medication in the event of a rash or unfavorable reaction and contact our office immediately.
- If sutures (stitches) have been placed, the material is dissolvable and generally does not require in-office removal.
- If you have any questions regarding your procedure or recovery, it is best to contact our office during regular business hours, as you will generally receive faster care. If you do not see steady improvement in the days following your procedure, it may require attention. A follow-up visit can be scheduled and is provided as a courtesy at no charge.
- For a true after-hours emergency, there is a 24-hour answering service available to be placed in contact with a doctor.