

Gum Surgery Aftercare

Gauze: A little continued bleeding is expected. If the bleeding is persistent, you can use gauze to stop it. Place a piece where the bleeding is coming from, and maintain firm pressure undisturbed for 10 minutes. You can repeat this up to 3 times (30 minutes).

Tea: A natural healing remedy we love! Hold a cool moist tea bag over the site. The tannin in the tea will help control the bleeding. Black tea works best for this.

Ice: You may use an ice pack on the outside of your face to reduce swelling. Follow a "20 minute on/20 minute off" schedule for up to 3 or 4 hours.

Food & Drink: You may drink after the initial gauze has been removed, but avoid eating until the numbness has worn off. You don't want to bite your tongue! For the first 24 hours, we suggest enjoying soft foods or liquids like soups and milkshakes. Avoid sipping through straws, as the suction they create can disrupt the healing process. Stay away from anything hot, extremely cold, spicy, or rough (like tortilla chips or hard crusty bread).

Medications: First things first, try to eat something before taking any medications. If we've prescribed you medications, take them as instructed, and discontinue antibiotics or anti-inflammatory medications before checking with us. Don't take aspirin - it can thin your blood and slow down healing.

Stitches: Stitches or a surgical bandage may have been placed over your gums to protect the area as it heals. The bandage will most likely come off on its own in between 24 hours and 2 weeks. If it is still present at your follow-up visit, we'll remove it then. Allow it to come off by itself, do not attempt to remove the bandage yourself. Likewise, your stitches will likely start coming out on their own. This can take a few days, or up to 2 weeks. Any remaining sutures will be removed at your follow-up visit.

Swelling: Swelling, bruising or discoloration ("black & blue") and difficulty opening the mouth are expected. Swelling usually reaches its maximum 48 hours after surgery and resolves over the next 48 hours. You can use Arnica Montana, a homeopathic remedy, to help reduce swelling.

Bleeding: Call us if you experience significant pain that is not well-managed by medication, swelling that worsens and could indicate an infection, or bleeding that cannot be controlled.

Your Prescriptions

For pain and swelling:

Motrin/Ibuprofen and Tylenol # 3

Directions: Take one Ibuprofen together with one Tylenol #3 every 4-6 hours. *If you do not want to take the Tylenol with codeine:* take one Ibuprofen with one extra strength acetaminophen (over the counter) every 4-6 hours.

For Infection:

☐ Amoxicillin

Directions: Take one tablet 2x per day, until finished

☐ Clindamycin

Directions: Take one tablet 3x per day, until finished

Antiseptic mouth rinse:

Peridex (chlorhexidine gluconate)

Directions: Rinse with 0.5 oz for 60 seconds, 2 to 3 times per day

Other Instructions

Cold Pack: Apply to the outside of your face. Follow a "20 minute on and 20 minute off" schedule for 3 to 4 hours.

Gauze/Tea Bag: Place gauze on surgical site and maintain firm pressure. Leave in place for 10 minutes, then change the gauze. Repeat for up to 30 minutes, using up to 3 pieces of gauze to control bleeding. You may also use a moist tea bag in place of gauze.

We're here for you. Please don't hesitate to call the office if you have any questions or concerns regarding your post-operative care. The telephone number is (212) 579-8885 and we're available seven days a week.