

Arbutus Station Dental

Key points for post-operative care after dental surgery:

- **Take pain medication as soon as you can when you get home**, even though the local anesthetic has not worn off and the area is still numb. Keep taking the prescribed pain medication doses at the recommended time intervals for at least the first 1-2 days. It can take 40 minutes for pain medication to work. Pain is worst about five hours after dental surgery.
- **Apply pressure to the wound to aid in blood clot formation.** After taking pain medication, place gauze or a dry tea bag over each wound. Keep in place for 1 hour, then remove it; if the area still bleeding, put another gauze or tea bag over the wound. Repeat until the bleeding ceases. Tannic acid in the tea aids in clotting. Caffeine, a stimulant, is released in small amounts. If preferred, use decaffeinated tea.
- **Avoid vigorous exercise for 24 hours** (e.g., running, swimming). Exercising can increase blood pressure, which might cause bleeding to start again.
- **Fluid diet for the first two days** (e.g., Jello, milkshakes, milk, soup, congee, ice cream, yogurt). An intact blood clot is vital for healing. Eating firm foods too soon can disturb the clot.
- **Do not rinse your mouth until the day after surgery.** The blood clot can be dislodged if you rinse on the same day as surgery. If the blood clot is disturbed, the socket might become infected or you may develop a dry socket.
- **Brush the teeth gently with a soft toothbrush**, commencing on the evening of the surgery. Keeping the teeth clean is essential for healing. A soft toothbrush will avoid damage to the tender surgical site.
- **Avoid smoking during the first week after surgery** (e.g., cigarettes, marijuana, vaping). Smoking delays healing by reducing blood supply to the wound. Smoking increases the risk of dry socket.
- **After two days, switch to semi-solid foods** (e.g., rice, noodles, pasta, scrambled egg). Do not chew solid foods too soon after dental surgery. The socket needs a stable blood clot for rapid healing. Solid foods can displace the blood clot.
- **Take the prescribed medications to ensure proper wound healing.** The drugs you have been prescribed are recommended to ensure rapid healing.
- **Call the office if you begin to experience pain and bad breath again a few days after the surgery.** Pain and bad breath are signs of dry socket. Treatment is simple and efficient but should be given promptly to avoid suffering.
- **After three days, rub fine table salt over the wounds** with a finger or Q-tip after every meal, for 30 seconds, then rinse immediately. Do not swallow the salt mixed with saliva. The physical massage aids healing by rubbing off bacteria on the wound surface, and also by stimulating blood flow; furthermore, the stitches will dissolve quicker. Do this for 7-10 days after the procedure.
- **Women of child-bearing age on oral contraceptives who are prescribed an oral antibiotic following dental surgery should use alternative forms of contraception** (e.g., condom) until the next menstrual period to avoid pregnancy.