

# Post-Operative Instructions following Oral Surgery procedures

Information for patients



## Please remember

- Avoid smoking and vaping for a minimum of two days.
- Take care with hot food / drink whilst numb.
- Take regular pain relief.
- Apply pressure with gauze if bleeding.
- Gentle mouth-rinsing the day after your procedure.

This information is to help you understand what to expect after your treatment and how to minimise the risk of any problems that can occur. It will also help to clarify when you should contact us for further information, treatment or advice.

## Pain

- There should be no pain immediately after the extraction / operation due to the local anaesthetic used. Numbness normally lasts for up to 4 hours before sensation returns slowly and care should be taken to avoid biting your lip or tongue during this time.
- Pain tends to be at its worst on the 2nd to 3rd day after the procedure and should respond to simple painkillers. It gradually improves over a period of 7-10 days.
- Simple painkillers available at the chemist such as paracetamol and ibuprofen should control the pain. Always follow the instructions on the packet.
- Avoid ibuprofen if you are asthmatic, have acid reflux or are currently also taking aspirin. If in doubt, ask your pharmacist for advice on what you can take.
- If there is a sudden increase in pain after a few days, or if the pain is unmanageable, you should contact the department for advice (details at the end of this leaflet).

- **AVOID SMOKING AND VAPING** for as long as possible (at least the two days following surgery and preferably longer). Smoking and vaping can dramatically increase the risk of poor healing, painful conditions and infection.

## Swelling

- This is common after you have had a tooth extraction or surgery has been carried out in the mouth.
- Any swelling normally reaches its maximum 2-3 days after surgery and should resolve within 7-10 days after surgery.
- Bruising of the face occasionally occurs and can take up to 2 weeks to resolve.

## Bleeding

- This should be minimal by the time you leave the surgery / hospital.
- Blood stained saliva is to be expected for 24-48 hours after the operation. It should be swallowed as normal.
- Do not rinse the mouth for the first day. This may disturb the blood clot and cause bleeding or poor healing.
- Avoid poking the wound with your tongue.
- Avoid vigorous exercise on the day of treatment as this is likely to cause the wound to bleed.
- If persistent bleeding occurs from the wound, roll up a piece of clean gauze / cotton handkerchief and place it directly on the wound and bite firmly for a period of at least 20 minutes. This should allow a new blood clot to form and stop the bleeding. If bleeding still persists, contact the department.

## Oral Hygiene

- The day after your treatment, use a hot salt-water mouth rinse. The water should be as warm as possible and a spoonful of salt added. Rinse with a mouthful and hold it still for a minute before spitting out.
- Repeat the rinsing 4 times daily, most importantly after meals. This will help healing.
- Keep your teeth clean with gentle tooth brushing if possible. Tooth brush bristles can be softened under a hot water tap.

## Diet

- Your mouth opening might be restricted for about a week due to swelling around the operation site.
- Eating semi-solid food should be possible.
- Use your own discretion and gradually start eating normally according to your own pace.
- **AVOID ALCOHOL** for at least 24 hours after your treatment

## Stitches

- If you have stitches (sutures) in your mouth, these are normally the dissolving type and usually drop out after a period of 7-10 days. Your surgeon will tell you if they needed to use non-dissolving stitches.

## Bone in the socket

- Occasionally small pieces of bone (splinters / shards) can work their way out of the socket where the tooth was removed / surgery carried out. This can be normal and can occur weeks after your initial treatment, leading to the gum surrounding these splinters becoming quite sore as they work their way out.

If you have any concerns then please contact us during normal working hours.

## Time off work

- This will depend on what treatment procedure you have had done and what you do for a living.
- If the treatment was straight forward and you are a fit and healthy individual you may be fine to return to work the following day.
- Your surgeon will advise you on an individual basis but it is up to you to decide when you are able to resume your normal activities.

## Follow-up

- If follow-up is needed, this will be arranged at the end of your appointment.

# To contact us in an emergency / for advice

## During normal working hours:

**Monday- Friday 9.00am-5.00pm**

**Telephone Oral Surgery reception on (0113) 343 6223 or switchboard on (0113) 244 0111, and ask to be put through to Oral Surgery / Acute Dental Care.**

## Outside normal working hours:

**Telephone the Leeds General Infirmary on (0113) 243 2799**

**Ask to speak to the on call Oral Maxillofacial Surgery team member. You will need to explain the nature of the problem and inform them of the details of your procedure so that they tailor their advice to you.**

You can also access this leaflet electronically:

<https://www.leedsth.nhs.uk/patients-visitors/patient-and-visitor-information/patient-information-leaflets/leeds-dental-institute>

## Personal Notes/Questions

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## What did you think of your care?

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