

General Pre-Op and Post-Op Instructions

Medication

Make sure that your prescriptions are filled before the day of the surgery and that you take them as directed.

It is VERY IMPORTANT that you eat a good meal before the surgery (unless you are told otherwise) because you may not feel like eating afterwards. This is also helpful because it is better for you to take medication with some food in your stomach.

If you are taking a sedative, then PLEASE HAVE SOMEONE TO DRIVE YOU TO AND FROM YOUR APPOINTMENT. You may have some trouble remembering things because of the sedative, so you should have a caretaker with you on the day of your surgery to supervise your care.

Pain medication should be taken before the anesthetic wears off. It is best to take it with food in your stomach (some good choices are milkshakes, protein drinks, and starchy foods). You may want to take the medication on your way home if you have a driver.

You must try to avoid disturbing the blood clot in your mouth, so do not use a straw. Simply drink straight from a cup or use a spoon. The blood clot will prevent excess bleeding and it protects the surgical area from bacteria and infection. You must also avoid consuming alcohol 1-2 days before the surgery and after because it can thin your blood, which delays healing and can cause bruising and excess bleeding.

As a note for women, antibiotics can make the pills, patches, shots, and other forms of birth control less effective. We suggest using an alternate form of birth control from the time you start taking antibiotics until your next menstrual cycle.

Have An Ice Pack At Home

You may experience pain and swelling after a surgery, but this can be controlled with ice. You may either use a bag filled with ice, a store-bought ice pack, or a bag of frozen vegetables. Wrap the ice pack in a thin towel such as a paper towel before pressing it against your face. Ice is most effective in the 2-3 days following the surgery and should be applied 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off. You can use moist heat in the 3-4 days following the surgery to help with swelling and discomfort.

Diet Suggestions

The foods you eat during the first 24 hours after the surgery should be room temperature or cooler. Avoid hot liquids and foods because these can cause excess swelling and bleeding by dilating the blood vessels.

We recommend eating soft foods such as ice cream, milk shakes, yogurt, tapioca, etc. These don't require a lot of chewing, which is good when you are still numb because if you eat chewy foods, then you risk biting your lips or cheeks without even knowing it. You can try eating soft sandwiches after the

anesthesia wears off. Some foods to avoid include those that are spicy, acidic, really sweet, or hot as well as citrus foods or those that can get into the wound site like seeds, nuts, and husks.

In the days following the surgery, you should still continue to eat soft foods like noodles, eggs, tofu, mashed potatoes, stuffing, meatloaf, soft fish, or soup. If you want to eat vegetables, then make sure that you cook them until they are soft. Take small bites and avoid chewing near the surgical site. If the surgery was completed near the front of your mouth, then do not bite into food. Instead, tear it into small pieces and chew near the back of your mouth.

After a few days, you may be able to eat chewier foods so long as you take small bites and avoid eating near the surgical site. We suggest that you still avoid hard foods like chips, apples, and raw carrots. Also remember to drink plenty of fluids throughout the first week after surgery.

It is normal to experience some oozing and bleeding in the 24-48 hours following a surgery. This should be gently drooled onto a napkin or into a sink. Do not spit, rinse, or suck, and also do not brush your teeth. Doing so can disturb the blood clot, which may result in excess bleeding and increased risk for infection. You will be sent home with gauze pads in case of bleeding.

We will let you know when you can start brushing your teeth again after the surgery. We may prescribe a mouthwash for you to clean your mouth with while you are limited in your brushing. This mouthwash will be used 30 minutes after you have brushed your teeth, twice a day. We ask that you do not use an over-the-counter mouthwash in addition to the prescription one.

Recuperation

You should rest for 24-48 hours after a surgery. If you feel comfortable, then you can return to your regular activities 72 hours after the procedure. We advise that you minimize exercise and other activities that elevate your heart rate and blood pressure 2-4 days after the surgery. Doing so may start bleeding again. It is important that you get plenty of rest in order to heal.

We will give you any additional instructions specific to your surgery at the time of the procedure. Call our office at 617-934-4952 if you have questions or concerns.