

infection

Continued pain, swelling or a raised temperature may indicate infection. As infection may spread or delay healing, you should telephone your surgeon.

Avoid infection by cleaning your mouth.

- Rinse your mouth gently after meals with Savacol (chlorhexidine mouth rinse diluted 1:1 with water). This mouth rinse is available from supermarkets and pharmacies.

OR

- A teaspoon of table salt in a glass of lukewarm water is a satisfactory substitute for chlorhexidine mouth rinses.

nutrition

Avoid dehydration by keeping up your fluid intake with plain water or diluted cordial. Water based ice blocks are a convenient method of providing a degree of fluid intake.

Eat soft nutritious foods such as soft boiled eggs, soup or fruit juices, even if you don't feel particularly hungry.

You may experience some nausea or lack of appetite following surgery.

activity / exercise

Avoid vigorous activity or sports for the first two days after surgery as this may stimulate bleeding.

Avoid contact sports for a minimum of three weeks after surgery.

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post operative instructions

This advice will help you achieve a smooth post-operative recovery.

Should any problems arise, telephone Intraface on 07 3852 4888 or after hours contact your surgeon:

Dr Hawthorne - 0418 714 657

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general comments

Healing after surgery to the **mouth, face** or **jaws** occurs quickly and without complication, in most cases.

Problems can arise due to the immediate functioning of the facial region i.e. you need to eat, breathe and talk during the healing process.

Due to the fact that the mouth cannot be sterilized, there is always a risk of infection to oral wounds. This risk of infection is increased if you use fingers or any objects to “play” with the wound. Smoking can also increase the risk of infection.

To keep your mouth clean you **should** use a soft toothbrush to clean your teeth, avoiding the extraction socket or wounds.

Please do not chew a numb lip or tongue as an injury can result.

Any stitches in your mouth are made from dissolvable material and will disappear in approximately 10-14 days.

The most common complications are pain, swelling, bleeding and infection.

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pain

It is common to experience some pain after surgery and your surgeon will prescribe appropriate medication for your type of surgery. You must not apply any drug to the surgical site itself.

It is important to start your prescribed pain relief **before** the local anaesthetic has worn off.

All medications have side effects and for further information refer to the drug's product guide. If you do experience a medication problem, please either contact your surgeon or general practitioner.

If significant pain persists for greater than 24-48 hours or your pain worsens you should telephone your surgeon.

It is recommended that for 24 hours after anaesthetic, you

- **do not drive**
- **do not operate machinery**
- **do not drink alcohol.**

swelling

Some swelling and/or difficulty in opening your mouth is common and should begin to subside after one to five days.

To reduce the swelling apply ice packs immediately following surgery. For the next 24-48 hours apply ice pack intermittently - 20 minutes on and 10 minutes off. Hot/cold packs from your local chemist or ice wrapped in a face washer are best.

DO NOT apply ice or ice packs directly to skin, use a tea towel or suitable cloth between the skin and ice pack.

bleeding

You may experience a slight ooze from the surgical site i.e. blood stained saliva.

Continued bleeding is uncommon after surgery. Below is a list of instructions for its management.

Remove any excessive blood clots from the mouth - rinse vigorously with salty water.

Apply a rolled bandage/gauze (from chemist) or clean, dampened, folded handkerchief directly to the wound. Keep this in place under moderate pressure by closing your jaw and biting.

Sit down and maintain the pressure for at least 20 minutes. If bleeding cannot be stopped by this method telephone your surgeon.

Avoid the risk of bleeding by refraining from excessive activity for the first 24 hours post surgery.

Also do not lie down flat. Relax, but keep the head elevated on at least 2 pillows. This decreases the venous pressure in the face, and thus the tendency to bleed and swell.

Avoid hot food/fluids until the next day as the heat may cause bleeding.

Avoid sucking through a straw as this can increase bleeding by disturbing the blood clot in the socket.