

DR. DALE M. GALLAGHER

ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

DIPLOMATE, AMERICAN BOARD OF ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY SPECIALIZING IN ADULT
AND PEDIATRIC CARE OF THE JAW AND FACIAL STRUCTURES

WISDOM TEETH - TMJ - DENTAL IMPLANTS - INJURIES - RECONSTRUCTION

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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS TMJ (TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT) SURGERY

Thank you for selecting our services for your oral health care needs. Some discomfort should be expected following oral surgery. To ensure the most comfortable and speedy recovery, we have put together some information to guide you through the next few days.

REMINDERS

- **NO SMOKING** (THIS WILL DRASTICALLY SLOW YOUR HEALING PROCESS).
- **NO ALCOHOL** UNTIL ALL MEDICATIONS ARE FINISHED!!
- **NO CHEWING – NO CHEWING – NO CHEWING---** STRETCH AND OPEN YOUR JAW!!!

YOUR MOUTH WILL NOT BE WIRED SHUT

☐ BLEEDING

Some bleeding or drainage may occur around the incision site and is a normal healing process. **Bandages will be kept on over night and removed by Dr. Gallagher at your appointment on the following day. Do not remove bandages at home.**

☐ SWELLING

Swelling is a normal occurrence after surgery. Majority of swelling occurs on the second and third days after surgery.
** Remember that swelling is a natural healing process. It is your body's way of protecting the surgical area and bringing nutrition to the healing area.

☐ BRUISING

In some instances, bruising can occur near the surgical site or around the ear(s) neck or jaw. This is a normal, healthy response and there is nothing to be concerned about. It is your body's way of "recycling" red blood cells.

☐ NUMBNESS

Local anesthesia is administered during surgery. Also, numbness around your ear(s) and cheek area may last for several weeks and/or months. During this time, do not insert Q-Tips into ear canal. The numbness will gradually dissipate over the following weeks/months post-operatively.

☐ DIET

Any chewing WILL damage your joint(s)!!! Drink plenty of fluids, enough so that your urine is clear. You will be on a minimum 3-month NO CHEW soft food diet or until instructed by Dr. Gallagher. Some soft food ideas are: ice cream, yogurt, pudding, protein milkshakes, overcooked pastas/vegetables, soups, macaroni and cheese, eggs, pancakes, mashed potatoes, ground meats, baked fish, chopped BBQ, etc. (Menus can be found – Soft Food Menu). Be sure to eat before taking any of the prescribed medications to prevent an upset stomach.

☐ SUTURES

The sutures used in the surgical site(s) will be removed by Dr. Gallagher 2 weeks after surgery.

☐ INCISION CARE

The only necessary care will be to wash your hair and face daily and keep ointment (i.e: Neosporin) applied on the incision site(s) for the first 2 weeks. Avoid excessive sun exposure to the surgical site to prevent visible scarring.

☐ SLEEPING

Continue with your regular sleeping habits. You will not damage any area by sleeping on it.

☐ EXERCISE

Light to moderate exercise the day following surgery will help reduce swelling and help you feel well. Get up, move around, take a shower, and participate in normal activities as much as possible. The quicker you get back into your regular routine the better you will feel.

☐ PRESCRIPTIONS

You were prescribed antibiotics, anti-swelling medicine and a pain medication (take pain medication as needed). Continue taking antibiotics and anti-swelling medications as directed and until they are all gone to help promote healing. Again, always make sure have eaten prior to taking your medication.

☐ JAW EXERCISES

You will be instructed to stretch and exercise your jaw 5 times each 1/2 hour, starting the day of surgery and continuing throughout your recovery until a full range of motion is reached. Your goal will be to open at least a 40mm. Opening and stretching (up/down and/or left/right) your jaw muscles will NOT damage your joints or surgical site.

***The only way to damage your joint(s) (with the exception of trauma/accident/injury to your jaw) at this point would be to "chew" during the first 3 months following your surgery.**

☐ TEMPERATURE

Temperature elevation can occur following oral surgery. If your temperature rises above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, take a fever reducer such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Motrin/Advil (ibuprofen) every 4-6 hours until the fever subsides.

☐ ORAL HYGIENE

Good oral hygiene is essential to good healing. Brush your teeth!

☐ SPLINT THERAPY

An appointment for splint adjustment is required within 10 days following surgery. **You are required to wear your splint 24/7 until otherwise instructed.**

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