



Patient Instructions

Fracture/Osteotomy

Post-operative care is of extreme importance following treatment of facial fractures and jaw surgery. Because the jaws are generally wired together, some initial difficulty may be encountered in adequate nutrition and oral hygiene. After a couple of days, however, one easily becomes accustomed to the new situation and can carry out fairly normal activities.

The following are a few points that must be strictly followed:

Emergency Wire Cutter. If your jaws are wired together, you must obtain a wire cutter of appropriate size to be used to cut the wires in case of emergency. Although it is rarely necessary to cut the wires, the wire cutters should be with the patient at all times. Because of the possibility of nausea and vomiting, drinking of alcoholic beverages is strictly forbidden. Smoking is also discouraged.

Adequate Nutrition. Adequate nutrition is of extreme importance. A blender is an indispensable tool, as almost all foods can be blended into a liquid form. Dietary supplements, such as powdered nutritional drinks mixed with milk, are also beneficial. It must be remembered that unless adequate and balanced amounts of carbohydrates, fats, and protein are consumed, proper healing may be impaired. Four to six meals per day may be necessary.

Oral hygiene. Oral hygiene must be meticulously carried out. Because food debris is laden with bacteria, poor oral hygiene may result in post-operative infections. A soft toothbrush is recommended to maintain good oral hygiene.

Antibiotics. Antibiotics are usually prescribed following fractures and surgery of the jaws. These medications will most often be in liquid form. It is very important that these are taken as directed to minimize infection and allow adequate healing. Pain medications also come in liquid form and will be prescribed as needed.

Removal of Wires. It is important that the wires not be removed except in emergency situations. Early removal of wires may result in non-union (faulty healing) with the bite being off, an infection of the bone, and pain and swelling.

The above is a general outline to follow, but certain things such as levels of activity, time off from work or school, etc. should be discussed with your oral surgeon. Strict adherence to the above instructions will usually result in an uneventful and uncomplicated recovery.

The above serves only as a guide for post-operative care.
Should you have any questions or problems, please feel free to call us at any time.

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