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Post operative care instructions – Minor Oral Surgery

Discharge Advice following surgery of the mouth - removal of oral soft tissue lesion(s), eg an oral biopsy or excision of a polyp.

After Treatment

Take time to rest for the remainder of the day. Avoid rinsing your mouth until the day following surgery. This is to allow the wound to settle and for healing to begin. Following surgery, your mouth will be numb for several hours due to the local anaesthetic used; you should therefore avoid any hot drinks or hot food for 6 hours which could cause a burn or start the wound(s) bleeding. When you start eating, a soft diet is recommended and should continue for a couple of days. Following surgery, you will experience some discomfort, swelling and bruising. Whilst the swelling usually begins to settle within a few days, the discomfort may persist for 5 - 7 days.

Mouth care

Good oral hygiene is essential to reduce the risk of infection. Again, avoid rinsing your mouth on the day of surgery as this may make the wound bleed. The day after treatment start using a mouthwash such as Corsodyl (aqueous chlorhexidine) three times a day and also warm salty water mouthbathes (half a teaspoon of salt to a tumbler of warm water) for five minutes at a time five times a day for at least five days (5,5 and 5). You should do this after eating and last thing at night. As far as possible, brush your teeth as normal and as thoroughly as possible within the bounds of common sense and tolerance.

Antibiotics

If you are prescribed antibiotics after treatment it is important to take them as directed and to finish the course. Women taking the oral contraceptive pill should use additional contraceptive precautions during the cycle. Speak to your GP or pharmacist if you require further advice on this matter.

Pain control

Usually it is only necessary to take simple painkillers, such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or diclofenac following treatment. Ideally, take these on a regular basis for the first 48-72

hours. Always read the instructions and do not exceed the maximum dosage for each.

Smoking and exercise

Do not smoke after oral surgery as this is associated with an increased risk of infection inside your mouth. It is recommended that you refrain from smoking for at least 2 - 3 weeks after treatment. You are also advised to avoid undertaking any strenuous exercise for 48 hours after treatment.

Bleeding

A small amount of bleeding is not unusual for a few days after treatment. If there is any increase in bleeding following treatment, roll up a clean cotton handkerchief or gauze, place it over the bleeding point and press firmly for 10 to 20 minutes. This typically stops any bleeding.

Sutures

The surgery may require sutures (stitches) in the mouth; these are usually resorbable and disappear themselves after about 10 - 14 days.

General anaesthesia

If your treatment was performed under general anaesthesia (G.A), you may feel tired and experience muscular aches and pains. This discomfort usually resolves after 48 hours and is helped by taking regular pain relief. You may also experience nausea and vomiting after a general anaesthetic. You should ensure that you have someone with you at home for the first night after your operation. Also, you should not drive, sign legal documentation or operate machinery for 48 hours.

Follow up

Arrangements for review will normally have been discussed with you prior to your discharge.

Need additional help

If you require advice (eg. have bleeding that does not stop) please call the Ward or Daycase Centre where you had treatment for further advice:

The Spire Cambridge Lea 01223 266900
The Nuffield Health Hospital 01223 303336

For further advice and information, please see:

- The British Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons: www.baoms.org.uk