

# Postoperative care after oral surgery

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**Information for patients who have had surgery in the outpatient clinic of the department of oral and maxillofacial surgery.**

### ■ **Eating, drinking, smoking and alcohol**

When the local anesthesia has worn out, you can eat and drink as long as it is not very hot or cold. Alcohol and smoking have adverse effects on the wound healing and may increase post-operative pain. Do reduce the use of these to a minimum.

### ■ **Postoperative pain, swelling and fever**

Pain and swelling are normal post-operative features and may last for about five days. Paracetamol is usually a sufficient painkiller and is easily available at drugstores and pharmacies. If necessary, the oral surgeon will prescribe another painkiller. The local anesthesia will be worn out after two to four hours. It is advisable to use the painkillers before the local anesthesia has worn out.

A swollen cheek, a bluish coloration of the skin and a decreased mouth opening are normal features for a couple of days. To reduce the swelling, the face can be cooled the first day with cold packages, for example ice-cubes in a small plastic bag wrapped in a washing-glove. Fever, up to 39° Celsius (102° F), is normal. Please, contact the department if the body temperature rises over 39° Celsius or the fever exists for more than five days.

### ■ **Bleeding**

If bleeding continues after treatment, you can try to stop this by applying a compress, for example a folded gauze, on the wound. By gentle pressure of the bite or finger during a half our, the bleeding will stop in most cases. If not, repeat the procedure. If this again does not work, contact the department.

### ■ **Oral hygiene**

Blood clotting in the wound is essential for an uneventful wound healing. Do not rinse the mouth during the first 24 hours. The mouth can be cleaned as usual after 24 hours. Do not brush teeth at painful spots, but rinse the area with lukewarm water (1/2 spoon salt/glass).

## ■ Sutures

Usually resorbable sutures are used. If not, an appointment for a control-visit will be made. Sometimes a medicinal gauze is inserted in the wound. In that case a control-visit for removal is necessary.

## ■ Apico-ectomy

If a temporary restoration is used in the tooth crown, replacement by a definitive restoration is indicated. Contact your dentist within two to four weeks after surgery for this treatment.

## ■ Oral-Antral-Communication

Sometimes an opening from the mouth to the maxillary sinus has to be closed with non-resorbable sutures. These wounds are prone to problems in healing. Therefore it is important to avoid differences in pressure between the mouth and the nasal cavity. So, keep your mouth open during sneezing and do not blow your nose. The first 48 hours some blood may come out of the nose. This is normal and will stop by itself.

## ■ Your questions

If you have questions you can contact the outpatient (Clinic oral diseases, jaw and facial surgery):

- location Alkmaar location: on working days from 8:30 to 16:30, telephone 072 - 548 3160
- location Den Helder: monday, tuesday and thursday from 8:30 to 16:30, telephone 0223 - 69 6435.

Please contact Alkmaar on other working days.

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