

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR ORAL AND FACIAL SURGERY

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POST-OPERATIVE INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS- LAUP

Surgery of any kind places a stress on your body. Get adequate rest and avoid strenuous activity for a few days following your procedure. If you received intravenous sedation or general anesthesia, it is important for someone to stay with you until you have recovered from the effects of these medications.

Post-operative problems may be minimized by the following instructions. Please read them carefully. It is strongly urged that they be followed.

1. Bleeding:

Bleeding should be minimal after CO₂ laser surgery. A small amount of oozing would not be unusual. Avoid *vigorous* rinsing, spitting, smoking and drinking through a straw for the first day after surgery, as all of these may reinitiate bleeding. If significant bleeding still continues, call the office for advice.

2. Swelling:

Swelling is a normal reactions to surgery, and varies from patient to patient and from one surgery to another. These are usually less with the laser than with other techniques. Swelling usually reaches its maximum about 48 - 72 hours after surgery. *Sleep with your head elevated* on two or more pillows for at least several days post-operatively.

3. Infection:

Most surgical procedures in healthy patients have a low risk of developing an infection. You have been placed on an antibiotic medication to reduce this risk. It is important to follow the directions on the label and take the medication until it is completely gone. An antibiotic oral rinse may also be prescribed. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medication and contact the office immediately.

There may be a slight elevation in temperature for 24 to 48 hours after surgery. This is a normal body reponse to the surgery. If the temperature persists or is greatly elevated, please notify the office.

4. Pain:

Initial pain is usually minimal following laser surgery. It is normal for the discomfort to increase around the third or fourth day after surgery. An anti-inflammatory pain medication was prescribed. Please take this as directed. You have also been given an anesthetic gargle to use as needed. You may also use Cloraseptic Lozenges/ Spray or Cepacol Anesthetic Lozenges every two hours as needed for discomfort. A stronger pain medication may be prescribed, but has a risk of respiratory depression. Contact the office before starting this medication. The pain medication should never be taken on an empty stomach. If you develop hives or a rash, discontinue all medication and contact the office immediately.

5. Nausea:

Post-operative nausea is usually due to swallowing a small amount of blood during and/or after surgery. A small amount of carbonated drink, such as 7-Up or ginger ale every hour for 5 or 6 hours will usually relieve this feeling. Sometimes pain medications can cause nausea. If nausea continues, contact this office.

6. Diet:

A bland liquid diet is recommended for the day of surgery. Following this, soft food high in vitamins and protein is advised. Avoid crunchy, spicy, or acidic foods, which may irritate the surgical site. The doctor will tell you when it is alright to resume a normal diet. No alcohol is to be consumed for the first four days after the procedure.

7. Oral Hygiene:

You should gargle and rinse your mouth gently with warm salt water solution(1 teaspoon salt in 8-12 oz water) every 2 hours for the first 1 -2 days, then 4 to 6 times per day for the first week, or until minimal discomfort is experienced. You may begin this as soon as you get home if there is no bleeding. You may brush your teeth after surgery, but avoid the treated area for a few days.

8. Smoking is a great irritation to surgical sites in the mouth and will significantly increase discomfort. Smoking delays healing and will increase the risk of infection of the surgical site. Smoking should be avoided or greatly reduced during the healing period.

9. Your lips may be dry and cracked due to stretching the corners of your mouth during surgery. Your lips should be kept moist with vaseline or other lip ointments.

10. *If you have sleep apnea and use CPAP or BiPAP*, continue to use your unit until advised otherwise.

11. Humidifiers can be helpful for throat dryness.

12. Continue to take all other prescribed medications.

Should you have any post-operative problems or questions, do not hesitate to call the office so we may help you.