

CENTRE ORAL & FACIAL SURGERY

GREG KEWITT DMD, MD, FACS

INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING BIOPSY OF THE MOUTH OR LIP

Please read this handout carefully and keep it as a reference for after surgery. Every surgical procedure is different, so not all of the instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. When in doubt, or if you have any questions not addressed below, please do not hesitate to call.

Swelling and Pain

Some discomfort and temporary swelling is normal. This is especially true for biopsy procedures on the lip or tongue. If your biopsy was on the lip, **ice** applied to lip for the first 24 hours can help reduce swelling and discomfort. Sleeping with your head slightly elevated can also help minimize swelling.

Bleeding

Oozing from the surgical site(s) overnight is normal. At first, you may notice that the bleeding is very minimal. It is normal to experience some heavy episodes of bleeding 3-6 hours after your procedure. This often coincides with the numbing medication wearing off. **If needed, you may use gauze or a moist tea bag to help control the bleeding.** Bite down on gauze or the tea bag placed directly over the area of bleeding with gentle but firm **continuous** pressure for 30 to 45 minutes. This will usually control most bleeding episodes. Remember, the blood you may see in your mouth is actually a little bit of blood mixed with a lot of saliva. Blood is a strong dye. A little bit of blood will color your saliva dramatically.

Medication

Take all medications as prescribed. Take the time to review any drug information provided to you by your pharmacist. It contains detailed information regarding medication side effects and precautions.

Do not take any below medications if allergic or otherwise advised by a physician.

Ibuprofen: Take 400mg (2 tablets) ibuprofen when you get home with food. Take another dose with the evening meal. The next day, take 400mg of ibuprofen three times a day with food. The prescription pain medication you received may be used to supplement the ibuprofen if needed. Some side effects of ibuprofen include gastrointestinal upset, bleeding, or worsening asthma symptoms. Generally, ibuprofen should be avoided if you regularly take blood thinners such as warfarin, Coumadin, or Plavix. It is recommended to consult with the prescribing physician.

Narcotic Pain Medication: **Do not** drive, use power equipment, engage in vigorous physical activity, or attempt to make important decisions if you need to use narcotic pain medication because **it can impair your judgment.** Additionally, pain medication may cause nausea and constipation. Taking the medication with food may reduce the chance of nausea. If you anticipate needing more prescription pain medication for the weekend please note: **telephone calls for narcotic pain prescription renewals are ONLY accepted during office hours.**

Antibiotics: The doctor may prescribe antibiotics to help prevent an infection. Complete the entire prescription. Antibiotics can produce several unwanted side effects including **gastrointestinal distress**, loose stools, and, in some rare cases, an **allergic skin reaction.** If you feel that you are having any of these reactions, please call our office.

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Wound Care Do's and Don'ts

- Do your best to **avoid disturbing the tissues** in the area of your surgery. In some cases **sutures** are placed. They usually dissolve and fall out within 5-10 days.
- Brush and floss your teeth like usual but avoid the area(s) where the surgery was performed. Make every effort to clean your teeth within your range of comfort—**good oral hygiene after surgery is very important.**
- Gently rinse your mouth with salt water (1/4 teaspoon salt dissolved in 8 ounces of warm water) 2-3 times a day beginning the day after surgery. Avoid vigorous mouth rinsing or use of water picks.
- Avoid mouth rinses containing alcohol such as **Scope® or Listerine®** for the next week. The high concentration of alcohol burns the tissues and can delay wound healing.
- **Avoid beverages containing alcohol** for a week after surgery as it can delay wound healing.
- **Do not smoke or use tobacco products.**
- Eat soft foods and nourishing liquids for the next 10-14 days. Do your best to avoid chewing in the area(s) where the surgery was performed.
- For the first two days, **keep vigorous physical activity to a minimum.** Light physical activity is encouraged the day following your surgery. If you are considering exercise, make sure that you are adequately hydrated and expect some throbbing. If bleeding occurs, exercising should be discontinued.

When will I know the results of the biopsy report?

The results of your biopsy will be reviewed with you at your post-operative appointment, which is usually scheduled 10-20 days after your procedure.

Please remember that your follow-up visits are very important.

Our 24 hour, 7 days a week contact number is 814-235-7700.

Our web site, **centreams.com**, has additional information that you may find useful.