

DRY SOCKETS: Dry socket typically occurs after removal of lower teeth, especially the molars including wisdom teeth. A dry socket typically occurs 3-5 days after surgery and consists of an area in the socket where the tooth was extracted where the blood clot breaks down and leaves some exposed bone. Common symptoms include dull, achy, throbbing sensation that can radiate to the ear and mimic an earache. Typically, the only treatment for dry socket is time. However, Dr. Scroggins may decide to place a dressing to relieve the pain. If you feel that you are developing a dry socket, please call our office. You will lessen your chances of developing a dry socket if you follow all of the written instructions on this sheet. Please note that patients who smoke, women who take birth control medication and the elderly have an increased risk of developing a dry socket.

SWELLING: Dr. Scroggins uses medications at surgery to reduce pain and swelling. Swelling and bruising are normal following surgery and will peak on the third morning following surgery, then gradually reduce in 5-6 days.

JAW STIFFNESS: Dr. Scroggins recommends jaw exercise after extraction of molars and especially after the extraction of wisdom teeth. One of the most important goals after wisdom teeth surgery is prevention of jaw stiffness. You should begin chewing and stretching the jaw the very next day after surgery. You should be able to open wide enough to fit three fingers straight up and down vertically between your upper and lower teeth 3 days after surgery. Patients who can do this recover more quickly and have less pain.

OTHER CONDITIONS: Discoloration of the face is caused by natural seepage of blood and fluid into tissues during the surgery. These yellow or blue areas will appear gradually and disappear slowly. Small bone fragments that sometimes appear will slowly work their way out of the gum tissue as the tissue heals. Numbness of the lower lip and/or tongue will sometimes occur after the surgery. This usually disappears in a few days to a few months. There may be a slight elevation in temperature for 24-48 hours after surgery. If the fever continues, or goes higher than 101 degrees Fahrenheit, please call our office. You may experience some facial muscle weakness and/or numbness immediately after receiving a local anesthetic. If you have difficulty raising your eyebrow or closing your eyelids, this will resolve in a few days. If you do experience any type of facial muscle weakness or numbness, please call our office to notify our staff.

ADDITIONAL PRESCRIPTIONS: Dr. Scroggins finds that most patients do extremely well following the prescribed medications and other instructions enclosed. Each prescription Dr. Scroggins provides is individualized for your maximum comfort following surgery. On some rare occasions there may be a need to prescribe additional medications. Please note that pain medication prescriptions may require a re-check appointment.



SAMUEL E. SCROGGINS, DMD

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Post-Op Instructions

**Removal of 3rd Molars
Impacted Teeth
Complicated Extractions**

EMERGENCIES/QUESTIONS: If any problems or questions arise, please call us at 540-989-5257. After-hours, the office number is answered by an answering service and Dr. Scroggins will return your call.

DRIVING/WALKING: Patients who have received intravenous medication should not drive for 24 hours. They should also walk with assistance to avoid stumbling and injury until fully recovered from the anesthetic. Showering and bathing should be delayed until the following day after surgery.

BLEEDING: Bite on gauze for thirty (30) minutes at a time. Initially, the gauze may be blood-tinged but this should lessen by the third or fourth change of gauze. Do not spit or use a straw for 24 hours. Talking and general activity will cause continued oozing. You should feel light, moderate pressure when biting.

If bleeding recurs or continues, place a damp caffeinated tea bag directly on the wound and bite for one hour. Positioning of the gauze or tea bag is very important. For wisdom teeth, the gauze or tea bag must press directly on the gum at the surgical site. Realize that blood-tinged saliva is normal and to be expected for 24 hours.

MEDICATION: Immediately after surgery, remove gauze and drink or eat something cool and soft. **DO NOT USE A STRAW!** Then take the medications prescribed. This way the pain medication will take effect before the numbness wears off. After that, take the pain pills as prescribed, or substitute milder medication (Advil, Tylenol, Aspirin, etc.) instead. You may also alternate the prescription pain pills with Advil, Motrin, or generic ibuprofen. Unless otherwise directed, take your medication with food.

If you begin having an upset stomach, it is usually due to the pain medication. If this does occur, stop the pain medication. Allow the stomach to settle. If upset stomach continues, please call our office.

If you begin to have itching or a rash, please take 25mg of Benadryl and call our office.

Do not drive after taking pain medication. In addition, birth control pills may not be effective for the cycle in which you are taking antibiotics. You need to take additional contraceptive precautions for that cycle.

ICE: Apply ice to jaws following all surgical procedures. The ice pack should be placed closest to the site of surgery and should be left in place for approximately 30 minutes. After the 30 minute period, please remove the ice packs and allow the skin to rest for 30 minutes. Repeat this procedure as often as possible, as ice packs are most helpful during the first 24 hours.

ORAL HYGIENE: After 24 hours, begin very gentle rinsing with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon salt to 6 oz. of warm water). Do not swish the water in your cheeks. Just move your head and allow the water to passively move across the stitches. Do not spit, let the water fall from your mouth. In most cases, brushing can be resumed the following day. Do not brush in the area of the stitches or the wound. Carefully brush only the teeth not involved in surgery. Vigorous rinsing of your mouth will cause loss of clot, dry sockets and pain!

One week after your surgery, you may fill the enclosed syringe with warm salt water (1/2 tsp. salt to 6 oz. of water) and insert the tip into the lower extraction site. Use this syringe with warm water to flush the surgical site of any food debris. This will need to be repeated twice per day until the site is closed. Please note that if you use the syringe sooner than a week after surgery it may remove the blood clot and cause a dry socket.

ORAL HYGIENE WITH GRAFT PROCEDURES: The bone and/or gum graft is delicate and can be damaged by rinsing or normal brushing. We suggest no rinsing around the graft. Do not use an electric toothbrush around the graft. To clean the area, place a normal toothbrush under warm water. Delicately brush the teeth adjacent to the graft and the sutures. You may use toothpaste on the remainder of the teeth. Take care not to spit, just allow the water to fall out of the mouth. Do not swish the water in your cheeks for two weeks.

SMOKING: Smoking delays healing and increases your chances of infection and pain. It is recommended that you do not smoke for a minimum of 5-6 days following extractions.

DIET: After the initial food, your diet should consist of soups, juice and even scrambled eggs or pasta the first day. Avoid very hot foods, but warm is ok. After the first day, you may gradually advance your diet to regular foods as you can tolerate. Avoid alcoholic beverages the day and night of surgery. It is very important that you take nourishment; please try not to miss a meal. Avoid peanuts, crunchy foods, and popcorn until the wounds are healed.

ACTIVITY: No heavy lifting or exercise for one week following removal of wisdom teeth unless otherwise directed by Dr. Scroggins. For bone or gum graft procedures, avoid vigorous exercise until your post-op visit. The post-op visit will normally be between 10-14 days after surgery.

STITCHES: Absorbable sutures may fall out in 3-10 days. Swallowed sutures will not cause a problem. If the sutures become bothersome, please call our office. One rare occasion an absorbable suture may come out the day of the surgery. This typically does not cause any future problems, but if you are concerned please call our office.