

Home Care After an Osteotomy

Home Care

Listed below is what to expect when you head home. Keep in mind each patient is different, so recovery speeds vary. Discuss any questions you have with your surgeon or nurse.

What to Expect

Swelling in your face and neck will increase after you are home. Swelling should slowly decrease 4-5 days after surgery. Use ice packs for 48 hours to help decrease swelling. The bruising may increase in the first few days, and then change colors as it goes away.

Some numbness of your face is normal and may take up to several months to fully go away. Some numbness may be permanent.

Dryness of your lips and nasal passages may occur. Carmex, Vaseline, or a lip moistener may help. A humidifier during the day and at night, may decrease nasal dryness.

Do **not** remove your head wrap. Your follow-up visit will be scheduled for 24 hours later and will be removed then.

Cleansing Your Mouth

Rinse your mouth every 2 to 4 hours and after meals with 1 teaspoon salt to 1 cup water. This cleansing is needed for comfort and infection-free healing. It also helps decrease bad breath and makes talking easier. Avoid mouth washes from the store. The alcohol content of these products can irritate the wound.

We suggest you use a child-size toothbrush (soft). Do not use a “water pic”.

Diet

Milkshakes, soup, yogurt and other foods with a soft texture are okay. Drink plenty of fluids. It is easier to get more fluids when you drink small amounts more often.

You might lose some weight, but you should not try to lose weight. A balanced diet is the best way to heal. Use a generic vitamin supplement with iron for two months.

Activity

Resume normal routine in about one to two weeks or as you feel able. Only light activity for two weeks. Check with your surgeon about when you can return to school or work. Avoid anything that may jar your jaw such as contact sports, horseback riding, biking.

Physical Therapy

You need to exercise your jaw after surgery to help regain normal mouth opening. Your doctor will talk to you about this and when you should start.

Medicine

Medicine for pain, nausea, nasal congestion and an antibiotic may be prescribed.

When to Call

- Increased pain not controlled by medicine
- Increased swelling
- Bleeding or foul-smelling drainage
- Fever by mouth greater than 101° F for longer than 12 hours
- Trouble breathing or “common cold”
- Nausea, vomiting or “flu”

Who to Call

Center for Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
Eastside Clinic
5302 Buttonwood Drive
Madison, WI 53718
(608) 240-0863

Westside Clinic
7007 Old Sauk Road
Madison, WI 53717
(608) 819-8760

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 2/2020 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#7953.