

Orthognathic Surgery patient instructions:

Check list one week before surgery:

- Pick up prescriptions from pharmacy – (Ideally one week prior to surgery in case your pharmacy needs to order any medications or they have questions)
- Identify a family member or friend ready to help you after surgery for a few days
- Obtain blender, crushed ice, and humidifier
- If you have facial hair such as a beard, goatee, or long side burns, please shave 2-3 days before surgery.
- Identify a location in your house to spend time after surgery such as a comfortable reclining chair next to the kitchen and bathroom.
- Set up your supplies for oral care and eating nearby (these are given during your preoperative visit.)
- Find a series of movies, books, or TV shows to watch after surgery.

Check list night before surgery:

- NOTHING TO EAT OR DRINK AFTER MIDNIGHT (or 8 hours prior to arrival time whichever comes first)
- Remove ALL fingernail polish and makeup including mascara
- Brush your teeth before you come to the hospital
- Do not shave facial hair the morning of surgery
- Remove any facial piercings. This includes tongue, lip, nose, and ear piercings.

- We understand that following a surgery patients and their families may be concerned with situations that arise and want to make sure everything is “normal”. The following instructions are **VERY** detailed and will have most everything that you need to know to handle any situation that may arise. Please make sure to read these (a few times if needed) prior to surgery so that you are comfortable after surgery. Remaining calm and relaxed is very important and most of the time this may allow you to work through frustrations that can arise while your adjusting to life after surgery.
- If something arises that can't be addressed from these instructions, please feel welcome to contact us at our main office line **206-207-1525**. If you call any team members direct line, or direct email, we cannot guarantee that your call/email will be answered and or returned instantly as we may be attending to other patients. The main # will **ALWAYS** be answered either by a team member or our answering service after hours. If you do need to leave a message, because all lines are being used, the main line voicemail is checked constantly, and your call will be returned.
- Very rarely does anything come up that is an emergency or needs to be handled ASAP. So please be aware that while every patient and their recovery is important and our utmost priority, there are times when we are seeing patients or Dr Bobek is in surgery, that there will be a slight delay in getting your questions answered.

Home care instructions:

After you have undergone a surgical procedure to correct the position of the upper jaw, lower jaw, or both, attention must be given to several aspects of postoperative care. This will help make the recovery as quick and easy as possible.

Since surgery produces soreness in the muscles and bones of the jaw (as well as the lips & nose) some difficulty is encountered in performing tasks such as eating, drinking and cleaning your teeth. However, each of these things must be done continuously and carefully to avoid postoperative problems. The following are instructions which should help you in your recovery.

MEDICATION:

You may be given several different prescriptions

PAIN MEDICATION: Should be taken only during the time that you feel significant discomfort. However, if only mild discomfort is experienced, try to use a less potent, over the counter medication such as Ibuprofen to reduce inflammation. A dose of 600 mg (3 tablets of Motrin® or Advil®) can be taken every 6 hours as needed. Ibuprofen can also be used to supplement the prescription pain medication, especially on the third day after surgery when the discomfort is worst. The prescription pain medication and the Ibuprofen can be alternated every 3 hours, so that each medication is spaced out 6 hours. This will keep you comfortable longer on the third day.

DECONGESTANTS: Following orthognathic surgery, especially upper jaw surgery, there is considerable stuffiness of the nose and sinuses. If decongestant such as Sudafed® is recommended, take the medicine as indicated on the bottle for seven to ten days or as needed for congestion.

NASAL SPRAY: (Afrin®, Neosynephrine® or equivalent) can be used at six to eight hour intervals to help improve breathing through your nose. You can use the Ocean (saline nasal spray) as much as you wish during the first two weeks. **Do not use Afrin® longer than 3 days.** These medications can be purchased from your pharmacy. **IF YOU HAVE HAD UPPER JAW SURGERY, DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE FOR 10 DAYS!**

LIP OINTMENT: You may be given lip ointment at the hospital. Use this for the first two days. Keep enough ointment on the lips to keep them looking wet. After two days stop using the ointment and use plain Vaseline®.

Nausea Medication: Nausea can occur after surgery. If you are feeling nauseous please use the Zofran (ondansetron) prescription given to you during the preop visit. This tablet dissolves in your cheek or under your tongue.

DRINKING

Following surgery it is common to have some numbness in the upper lip, lower lip, or both. When combined with facial swelling, a sore throat from the anesthesia, and soreness due to the incisions inside the mouth, a task as basic as drinking may be difficult. Here are several suggestions which may help you:

1. You will be given a syringe and small tube to help you begin drinking liquid by mouth. Do not use a straw for the first day or two since this may be difficult do to numbness in your lips, and it can create more bleeding.
2. Even though some fluids may spill, attempt to drink from a cup as soon as possible as it is the most effective way for taking fluids. The use of a "sippy cup", like those used by toddlers, may be helpful for the first few days.
3. Place a towel under your chin and put a small amount of liquid into the cup. Tip your head back slightly and attempt to open your mouth a tiny bit while pouring the fluid into your mouth. If necessary, use slight finger pressure to place your lips together and attempt to swallow. This will be difficult at first, but you will find that it will become much easier in a day or two.
4. If drinking from a cup seems to be impossible, continue using the syringe with the tubing attached. Another alternative is a squeeze bottle to squirt fluid in your mouth.

TAKING IN ADEQUATE AMOUNTS OF FLUID IS ESSENTIAL FOLLOWING SURGERY. YOU NEED ABOUT 2 TO 2 ½ QUARTS (8-10 CUPS OR ROUGHLY 2 LITERS) PER DAY.

EATING

At least 1,500 CALORIES DAILY

Initially, it will be difficult to eat adequate amounts of food. Try to eat five to six times a day, eating smaller portions each time. Use the following guidelines for progressing from a liquid/blended diet to firmer foods.

WEEK 1: During this time the diet should be a pureed or blenderized diet. Think Smoothies, milkshakes and pureed soups. (You can also eat foods such as applesauce, oatmeal and pudding if able). It may be difficult to open your mouth wide enough to get a spoon inside. A baby-sized spoon may be helpful. A diet supplement such as Boost®, Ensure®, Sustacal®, or similar substitutes may be used once or twice a day to increase calorie intake.

WEEK 2-6: Your diet should include foods that are extremely soft in consistency that you do not need to chew. Think smushy food diet. Foods that you can smash with your tongue and roof of your mouth. For example: scrambled eggs, pancakes, waffles, refried beans, mac and cheese, flaky soft fish. Anything that you can cut up small enough that you do not need to chew.

If you have a splint in place this will be removed at the 3 week post-operative visit.

Changes in your diet as well as the use of pain medicine may cause constipation. If you have not had a bowel movement by 2 or 3 days after surgery you should begin to add fiber to your diet. Start taking Metamucil® (1 teaspoon mixed with 8 ounces of water 3 times per day). If this doesn't help within a day or two, call our office and we can suggest other medications.

ELASTICS (RUBBER BANDS)

Usually some type of elastics (small rubber bands) are used during the time immediately after surgery. These rubber bands are placed around the small hooks on the braces or arch wires. The purpose of these small elastics, is to help train you to bite into the new jaw position and to limit jaw function. There may also be a plastic splint wired either to the upper or lower jaw. This splint is custom made to fit to your teeth. With the elastics in place, and your teeth together, you should see that the teeth fit together and are seated fully into the splint.

5. The first week after surgery most patients just leave the elastics on as they were placed in the hospital. It is not an emergency if an elastic breaks. Just try to replace it as best you can.
6. After the first week, the elastics may be removed during eating, but should be replaced immediately after you clean your teeth.
7. The elastics should be worn at all times except when eating. They should be placed in the manner shown to you during your last appointment (or upon discharge from the hospital).
8. In your pre-op bag, there are 100 Elastics which should be more than enough to get you through between your follow up appointments.

HYGIENE

It is extremely important for you to keep all areas inside your mouth clean after surgery. You should brush your teeth and rinse your mouth after eating.

1. During the first week after surgery be careful while brushing your teeth to keep bristles of the brush on or very near the teeth and braces. Expect soreness and difficulty opening your mouth. This may limit your ability to clean the tongue side of your teeth. This will improve in time.
2. Rinse your mouth thoroughly with warm salt water (8 ounces water with ¼ teaspoon salt stirred in) or Peridex® for 2 weeks after surgery. **Do not use a water pik or electric toothbrush inside your mouth for the first week after surgery.**

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO NOT SMOKE (CIGARETTES OR MARIJUANA) FOR AT LEAST 4 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY AS THIS CAN CREATE PROBLEMS WITH HEALING AND MAY CAUSE INFECTION.

DRESSINGS

ICE PACKS: Ice should be used for the first 24-48 hours after surgery to reduce swelling. Apply ice to upper jaw (across cheeks and bridge of nose). You can continue to use ice on an off for the first week to help with swelling and discomfort. For the lower jaw, ice packs can be applied to your cheeks. Use ice for 20 minutes on/ 20 minutes off as needed.

ELASTIC FACIAL DRESSING (jaw bra): (You will leave the hospital with this) the elastic bandage should be kept in place as much as possible for the first 24-48 hours. This bandage will help reduce swelling. Wearing this dressing at night will also help reduce swelling that may occur when lying down. In many cases: there will be some type of pressure dressing or bandage that will be applied to help reduce swelling and bleeding.

ON THE third-fourth DAY AFTER SURGERY: These are often considered the worst days for discomfort. Warm moist heat and massage should be used as needed. Warm, moist compresses or towels can be used around the face with light, circular pressure or massage. If you wish you can continue to ice.

SUTURES: If you had lower jaw surgery one suture may be placed on the outside of your face. These dissolve on their own. For the first week use a small amount of bacitracin twice a day over the incision. After the first week you can change to Aquaphor ointment (over the counter).

TAPE: If you had chin surgery you may have some tape on the chin area. This can be removed three to four days after surgery in the shower. If it is still in place at your one week post op visit we remove it in clinic.

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

SLEEP: Sleep with your head elevated to at least a 45 degree angle. This is for the first 1-2 weeks to help decrease the amount of swelling after surgery. We recommend sleeping in a recliner, on the couch propped up with a bunch of pillows, or in bed with a wedge pillow.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Following surgery, you will find that your energy level will be lower and will take some time to return to normal. For the first week you can walk around the house, but take it easy and do not get your blood pressure elevated. Start slowly and work back up to your normal level. Physical exercise such as brisk walking or running can begin 2 or 3 weeks after surgery. Begin by going shorter distances and at a slower pace than usual. As your endurance and confidence increase, gradually increase the level of exercise within your level of comfort.

JAW EXERCISES

We encourage a gradual progression of movement and use of the jaw, keeping in mind that complete healing does not take place until approximately two to three months after surgery.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SURGERY: Since surgery causes soreness in the muscles and bones of your jaw, movement may be difficult initially. We do not recommend any specific exercises during the first week to 10 days after surgery. However, simply attempting to open your mouth and move your jaw side to side several times a day may help increase movement.

10 DAYS TO FOUR WEEKS AFTER SURGERY: Stand in front of a mirror and attempt to open and close your jaw as much as possible. Simply move your jaw forward and backward, side to side, and open and close, attempting to increase your mouth opening with your jaw muscles only. Moist heat placed on the side of your face before and during these exercises may make them more comfortable and more effective. Do not use finger pressure on your teeth to help stretch your jaw opening.

FOUR TO EIGHT WEEKS AFTER SURGERY: Continuing the stretching (outlined above). At your 6 week follow up appointment we will give you jaw stretching devices to help your mouth opening. Using the jaw stretchers and getting back into chewing a normal diet will help you get back to a normal mouth opening.

While the postsurgical period can be uncomfortable and progress may seem to occur slowly, adherence to these home care instructions will help you achieve an excellent outcome in the shortest time possible.

CHECK LIST OF MEDICINES AND SUPPLIES THAT MAY BE HELPFUL AFTER SURGERY

PERSCRIPTIONS GIVEN BY YOUR DOCTOR

- PAIN MEDICATION
- IBUPROFEN
- NAUSEA MEDICATION
- ANTIBIOTICS
- NASAL SPRAYS

OTHER SUPPLIES THAT MAY BE HELPFUL

- LIP MOISTERIZER
- FIBER SUPPLEMENT *Metamucil® (orange flavor is the best) or similar product
- ELASTIC BANDS *in your white pre-op bag
- DINER STYLE KETCHUP BOTTLE, SIPPY CUP AND BABY SPOON
- BLENDER *ingredients for smoothies
- DETERMINE A SPOT TO SLEEP **sleep elevated - at least a 45 degree angle for the first 1-2 week to help with swelling we recommend in a recliner, on the couch propped up with a bunch of pillows, or in bed with a wedge pillow.