

Post-Operative Instructions for General Anesthesia Procedure

Congratulations on your child's successful dental procedure under general anesthesia. To support a safe recovery and optimal healing, please carefully follow your child's anesthesiologist's recommendations along with the guidelines below.

Immediate Aftercare

- Your child will be monitored until the effects of anesthesia wear off. Expect some grogginess, mild discomfort, or irritability as they awaken.
- It is normal for your child to feel confused or sleepy. A parent or caregiver should remain with them during this initial recovery period.

Pain Management and Medications

- Your child may have received local anesthetic (numbing medicine) around the treated teeth, which may provide some lingering numbness and pain relief.
- If discomfort arises, you may give an over-the-counter pediatric pain reliever as follows:
 - **For severe pain:** Alternate ibuprofen (Motrin) and acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 3–4 hours.
 - **For mild to moderate pain:** Use either ibuprofen or acetaminophen every 6 hours, as directed on the packaging.
- Monitor for unusual or persistent pain. If discomfort worsens or does not improve with medication, contact our office.
- **If crowns were placed:** Your child may feel pressure around those teeth. Pain relievers may not completely eliminate this sensation, but it should improve over time.

General Recovery

- Temporary side effects from general anesthesia may include nausea, vomiting, a mild fever, or changes in sleeping patterns.
- If your child is unable to drink fluids or becomes dehydrated after 2–3 days, please visit your nearest Emergency Department.

Diet and Hydration

Immediately After Surgery

- Start with clear liquids (water or electrolyte drinks) once your child is fully awake and alert.
- Think of the recovery like a mild stomach bug: rest, hydration, and easing back into eating.
- Avoid giving large amounts of food immediately; allow the stomach to settle.

For the Next 3-4 Days

- Begin with soft, bland foods (e.g., applesauce, yogurt, mashed potatoes).
- If chewing or swallowing is difficult, continue with a liquid diet until your child is comfortable with soft solids.
- Avoid spicy, hot, or crunchy foods until your child's mouth feels normal.
- If crowns were placed, avoid sticky foods like Laffy Taffy, Jolly Ranchers, and caramel, as they may pull off the crowns (though we should be avoiding those anyway!)
- **If extractions were done:** Avoid hard, crunchy foods like chips and popcorn for the next 7-10 days.
- Encourage small, frequent sips of water to keep your child hydrated.

Oral Care

- Do not brush your child's teeth tonight to allow the fluoride varnish (if applied) to remain undisturbed. Begin gently brushing your child's teeth tomorrow with a soft toothbrush and a small amount of toothpaste, being careful around any treated areas.
- Brushing gently helps reduce bacteria and promotes healing. Proper care around the crowns and gum line is essential.
- When flossing around crowns, slide the floss out sideways instead of pulling straight up to prevent dislodging the crown.
- Some mild gum inflammation, oozing, or light bleeding is normal during the healing process.

Activity Restrictions

- Create a calm and soothing environment to keep your child comfortable. Encourage rest and quiet activities throughout the day to support recovery.
- Avoid active play, running, swimming, or sports for at least 24-48 hours.
- Ensure your child gets plenty of sleep, as rest is essential for recovery.
- If your child experiences nausea, keep their head slightly elevated with an extra pillow to help ease symptoms.

Possible Side Effects

Common Side Effects

- Mild swelling, discomfort, or a sore mouth
- A mild low-grade fever
- **If an extraction was done:** The socket will take about 2-3 weeks to heal. Inflammation, minor bleeding, or oozing is normal during this period. Avoid vigorous rinsing, spitting, or using straws, as these actions might disrupt the healing process.

Monitoring for Complications

- Watch for any signs of infection (e.g., unusual swelling, abscess formation, pus, foul odor)
- Pain that worsens or does not respond to medication
- **If a pulpotomy was done:** There is a possibility that the body may not respond well to the medications used.

Follow-Up Appointment

- A follow-up visit will be scheduled to check healing and answer any concerns. If you have not yet received a date, please call our office to schedule.

Contact Our Office If Your Child Experiences Any of the Following:

- If your child develops a high fever or if the fever lasts more than 24 hours.
- If there is excessive bleeding or swelling that does not subside.
- If there are signs of infection such as pus, foul odor, or increasing pain.
- If your child has difficulty breathing or shows unusual behavior that concerns you.
- If your child refuses to drink or eat for an extended period.

Every child heals at their own pace, and we hope these instructions serve as a helpful guide during your child's recovery. Thank you for trusting us with your child's dental care. We are committed to ensuring a smooth and speedy recovery. If you have any concerns or if your child's condition changes unexpectedly, please contact our office immediately at **571-210-2771**.

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