

Post-Op Instructions for Orthognathic Surgery (Jaw Surgery)

1. Immediate Post-Surgery Care

- **Pain Management:**

- **Oxycodone:** This prescription pain medication may be prescribed for moderate to severe pain. Take it as directed by your surgeon, typically every 4-6 hours, as needed.
- **Tylenol (Acetaminophen):** Can be taken for mild to moderate pain relief, typically every 4-6 hours. Do not exceed 4,000 mg per day.
- **Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin):** This can help with pain and inflammation. Typically, 200-400 mg every 4-6 hours, but do not exceed 3,200 mg per day.
- **Zofran:** If you experience nausea, take this as prescribed (usually 4 mg every 8 hours).

Important Note: Always follow your surgeon's exact instructions regarding medication usage. If you experience any side effects, such as dizziness, excessive drowsiness, or allergic reactions, contact your doctor immediately.

- **Swelling & Bruising:**

- Apply ice packs to your face (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off) for the first 48 hours to help reduce swelling and bruising. After 48 hours, transition to heat packs.

- **Nasal Care:**

- **Saline Nasal Spray:** Use saline nasal spray several times a day to keep nasal passages moist, especially if you're feeling congested.
- **Afrin:** If prescribed, use Afrin for short-term nasal congestion relief (no more than 3 days). Afrin can also be used to help with nasal bleeding.

- **Wound Care:**

- You may brush your teeth 24 hours after surgery. Generally, a baby toothbrush works best. Try to brush the teeth only, and stay away from the gums, lips and cheeks.

- **Hydration:**

- Stay hydrated, especially in the first few days post-surgery. Avoid using straws as they can create suction that might harm your healing sites.

Diet Recommendations Post-Op

First Month (Liquids Only)

- **Liquid Diet:**
 - For the first **4 weeks** after surgery, you should stick to a **liquid diet**. This ensures that no pressure is applied to your jaw while it is healing.
 - Include **high-protein shakes, broths, smoothies, and nutritional drinks** like Ensure or Boost to maintain nutrition.
 - **Avoid hot drinks** (to prevent irritation) and use a **blender** to make liquids smooth and easy to consume.
 - **Important:** Do not use straws for the first month, as the sucking motion may disturb healing and increase the risk of complications.

Weeks 5-8 (Soft Foods Phase)

- **Soft Foods:**
 - After **1 month**, you can begin to transition to **soft foods**. This includes foods that don't require much chewing and are easy to swallow.
 - Some examples of soft foods you can start with include:
 - Mashed potatoes
 - Scrambled eggs
 - Smooth soups and broths (without chunks)
 - Applesauce or mashed fruit
 - Yogurt and pudding
 - Soft oatmeal or porridge
 - Smoothies with added protein powder
 - You can **blenderize** your meals if necessary to achieve the right consistency.
- **Avoid Crunchy or Hard Foods:**

- Do not eat any hard, crunchy, or chewy foods that require you to chew significantly, as your jaw and muscles are still healing. Continue to avoid foods that could irritate your surgical sites.

Weeks 9-12 (Transition Phase)

- **Gradual Introduction of Semi-Soft Foods:**

- Between **9 and 12 weeks**, you can start introducing foods that require light chewing. However, continue to **avoid full chewing** during this period.
- Foods to try (if cleared by your surgeon) might include:
 - Soft-cooked pasta (without sauce that is too thick)
 - Soft rice (with lots of moisture)
 - Steamed vegetables (softened to the point they are easy to mash)
 - Ground meats (like soft chicken or turkey, well-cooked)
 - Well-cooked, tender fish
- **Do not fully chew** until you get clearance from your surgeon at the 12-week mark. Chewing too early may disturb the healing of your jaw.

12 Weeks and Beyond (Full Diet)

- **Chewing Resumption:**

- At **12 weeks**, you can begin **full chewing** unless your surgeon advises otherwise. By this time, most of the swelling will have gone down, and your jaw should have healed enough to allow normal chewing.
 - Gradually return to regular foods, but continue to avoid hard, tough, or crunchy foods for a little while longer as your jaw fully adjusts.
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Medication Guidelines

1. Tylenol (Acetaminophen)

- **Dosage:** 500 mg every 4-6 hours as needed.
- **Maximum:** Do not exceed 4,000 mg per day.
- **Purpose:** Mild to moderate pain relief and fever reduction.

2. Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin)

- **Dosage:** 200-400 mg every 4-6 hours.
- **Maximum:** Do not exceed 3,200 mg per day.
- **Purpose:** Reduces inflammation, swelling, and mild to moderate pain.

3. Oxycodone

- **Dosage:** Take as prescribed by your surgeon, typically every 4-6 hours for moderate to severe pain.
- **Purpose:** For severe pain relief post-surgery.
- **Note:** Only use this medication as directed for a limited time.

4. Zofran (Ondansetron)

- **Dosage:** 4 mg every 8 hours as needed for nausea.
- **Purpose:** Prevents and treats nausea and vomiting that may occur from anesthesia or pain medications.

5. Afrin (Oxymetazoline)

- **Dosage:** Use 1-2 sprays in each nostril, typically every 10-12 hours for up to 3 days.
- **Purpose:** Relieves nasal congestion and swelling. Help control nasal bleeding
- **Note:** Limit use to 3 days to avoid rebound congestion.

6. Saline Nasal Spray

- **Dosage:** Use 2-3 sprays per nostril every 4-6 hours to keep nasal passages moist.
 - **Purpose:** Keeps nasal passages hydrated and clear.
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Exercise & Physical Activity Restrictions

1. Avoid Raising Your Heart Rate Above 100 bpm

- **Why:** After jaw surgery, raising your heart rate too high can increase swelling and disrupt the healing process. You should **avoid intense exercise or activities** that cause your heart rate to rise above 100 beats per minute (bpm) for the first **3 weeks** post-surgery.
- **Recommended Activities:**
 - Light walking, stretching, and gentle movements are generally safe.
 - Focus on **low-impact activities** such as gentle walking or light stretching to keep your body active without putting strain on your healing jaw.

2. No Bending Over with Head Below Heart

- **Why:** Bending over with your head below your heart can increase pressure in your face and jaw, which may cause bleeding, increased swelling, or discomfort in the healing areas.
- **What to Do Instead:**
 - When you need to pick something up, **bend at your knees** rather than your waist.
 - Avoid any sudden movements that may put pressure on your head or jaw.
 - **Avoid heavy lifting** or strenuous activities for at least the first 3 weeks after surgery.

3. Avoid Strenuous Exercise

- **Why:** Strenuous exercise or activities that increase your heart rate above 100 bpm can affect your recovery, delay healing, and increase swelling or discomfort.
- **What You Can Do:**
 - Gentle **walking** is a good way to stay active, but ensure you're not overexerting yourself.
 - **Breathing exercises** or gentle yoga can help improve circulation and relaxation without raising your heart rate too much.

4. Resuming Regular Exercise

- After **3 weeks**, you can start slowly increasing the intensity of your activities as long as you feel comfortable and as directed by your surgeon.
- **Before engaging in more intense workouts or sports**, get approval from your surgeon to ensure your jaw has healed sufficiently.

Additional Recovery Tips

- **Rest:** Prioritize rest during your recovery to allow your body to heal properly.
- **Oral Hygiene:** Gently brush your teeth with a soft toothbrush and rinse with an antibacterial mouthwash. Avoid brushing directly on any incisions unless your surgeon has given specific instructions.
- **Avoid Smoking or Drinking Through a Straw:** Smoking and sucking on straws can negatively impact your healing process.
- **Do not blow your nose.**
- **Do not smoke or be exposed to second hand smoke**
- **Follow-Up Appointments:** Make sure to attend all scheduled appointments with your surgeon to monitor your progress and address any concerns.

PLEASE REPORT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TO OUR OFFICE:

- Sudden or excessive bleeding or swelling.
- Any itching, rash, or reaction to medications.
- Fever, temperature over 100 degrees (taking orally).
- Discharge from the incision (other than blood).
- Any Injury to the face