



Post-Operative Instructions Orthognathic (Jaw) Surgery

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):** May 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):** Helps reduce pain and inflammation. Typically, 600 mg every 6–8 hours. Do not exceed 3,200 mg per day.
- **Zofran (Ondansetron):** If you experience nausea, take as prescribed (usually 4 mg every 8 hours).

Important Note: If you experience 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, you may transition to warm compresses or heat packs.

Nasal Care

- **Saline Nasal Spray:** Use several times per day to keep the nasal passages moist, especially if you experience congestion.
- **Afrin (Oxymetazoline):** If prescribed, use for short-term relief of nasal congestion (no more than 3 days). Afrin may also help control nasal bleeding.



Wound Care

- You may brush your teeth 24 hours after surgery. A baby toothbrush or soft toothbrush usually works best. Focus on brushing the teeth only, avoiding the gums, lips, and cheeks near the surgical areas.

Hydration

- Stay **well hydrated**, especially during the first few days after surgery. **Do not use straws**, as suction may disrupt healing sites.

Diet Recommendations Post-Op

First Month (Liquid Diet)

- For the first 4 weeks after surgery, you should follow a liquid diet to avoid placing pressure on the healing jaw.
- Recommended options include:
 - Protein shakes
 - Broths
 - Smoothies
 - Nutritional drinks such as Ensure or Boost
- Avoid hot liquids, as they may irritate surgical areas. Use a blender if needed to ensure liquids are smooth and easy to consume.

Important Note: Do not use straws during the first month, as suction may interfere with healing.

Weeks 5-8 (Soft Foods Phase)

- After approximately 1 month, you may begin transitioning to soft foods that require minimal chewing.
- Recommended options include:
 - Mashed potatoes



- Scrambled eggs
 - Smooth soups or broths (without chunks)
 - Applesauce or mashed fruit
 - Yogurt or pudding
 - Soft oatmeal or porridge
 - Smoothies with added protein powder
- Meals may be blended if needed to achieve the appropriate consistency.
 - Avoid hard, crunchy, or chewy foods, as the jaw and surrounding muscles are still healing.

Weeks 9-12 (Transition Phase)

Between weeks 9 and 12, you may begin introducing foods that require light chewing but avoid full chewing until cleared by your surgeon.

- Possible foods include:
 - Soft, cooked pasta
 - Moist rice
 - Steamed vegetables softened enough to mash
 - Ground meats such as well-cooked chicken or turkey
 - Tender fish

Do not resume full chewing until cleared by your surgeon at approximately 12 weeks. Chewing too early may disrupt healing.

12 Weeks and Beyond (Return to Normal Diet)

At approximately 12 weeks, most patients can begin returning to normal chewing unless your surgeon advises otherwise.

- Gradually return to regular foods. Continue to avoid very hard, tough, or crunchy foods until your jaw feels fully comfortable.



Medication Guidelines

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

Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin)

- Dosage: 600 mg every 6-8 hours as needed
- Maximum: Do not exceed 3,200 mg per day
- Purpose: Reduces inflammation, swelling, and pain

Oxycodone

- Dosage: Take as prescribed, typically every 4-6 hours
- Purpose: Severe pain relief
- Note: Use only as directed and for a limited time

Zofran (Ondansetron)

- Dosage: 4 mg every 8 hours as needed
- Purpose: Prevents and treats nausea and vomiting

Famotidine

- Dosage: 20 mg every 12 hours while taking ibuprofen
- Purpose: Protects the stomach

Afrin (Oxymetazoline)

- Dosage: 1-2 sprays per nostril every 10-12 hours for up to 3 days
- Purpose: Relieves congestion and helps control nasal bleeding
- Note: Limit use to 3 days to avoid rebound congestion

Saline Nasal Spray

- Dosage: 2-3 sprays per nostril every 4-6 hours
- Purpose: Keeps nasal passages moist and clear



Exercise & Physical Activity Restrictions

Avoid Raising Your Heart Rate Above 100 bpm

- Avoid activities that elevates your heart rate above 100 bpm for the first 3 weeks
- Light walking and gentle movement are recommended

Do Not Bend with Your Head Below Your Heart

- This increases facial pressure and may cause bleeding or swelling
- Bend at the knees, not the waist
- Avoid lifting more than 10 lbs

Avoid Strenuous Exercise

- Strenuous activity may delay healing and increase swelling
- Gentle walking, breathing exercises, or light yoga are acceptable

Resuming Exercise

- Gradually increase activity after 3 weeks as tolerated
- Obtain surgeon approval before returning to intense exercise

Additional Recovery Tips

- Rest: Prioritize rest to support healing
- Oral Hygiene: Use a soft toothbrush and antibacterial rinse: avoid incisions unless directed
- Avoid smoking, secondhand smoke, and drinking through a straw
- Do not blow your nose
- Attend all follow-up appointments

Please Report Any of the Following to Our Office

- Sudden or excessive bleeding or swelling
- Nosebleed that does not stop within 15 minutes despite pressure
- Itching, rash, or medication reactions
- Fever over 100°F (oral temperature)
- Discharge from the incision (other than blood)
- Any injury to the face
- Any movement of the jaw or changes in your bite