



Oral, Maxillofacial, and Dental Implant Surgery
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Patient Surgical Instructions:

Facial Lacerations

The following information is provided to assist you in caring for your facial wounds. If you have any questions regarding any of this information, please ask.

PAIN:

You may have some discomfort as your wounds are healing. If you have been given a pain medication prescription, take this medicine only as directed. If you have not received a prescription for pain (and you are not allergic) you may take:

- **Adults:**

Extra strength Tylenol 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed

Ibuprofen 400 mg every 4-6 hours as needed for pain

- **Children:**

Children strength Tylenol every 4-6 hours

BLEEDING:

If you experience any bleeding from the wound, apply firm pressure for 15 minutes. Please call our office if this does not stop the bleeding.

INFECTION:

Facial wound infection is rare. Keeping your wounds clean (see wound care) will decrease the risk of infection. You should call our office if you detect any **new** swelling or drainage from your wound(s).

If you have been given a prescription for antibiotics, take the prescribed antibiotics as directed to help prevent infection. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction and notify our office. Otherwise, please finish your entire course of antibiotic. Antibiotics can sometimes cause an upset stomach. If this is the case, it is advisable to take acidophilus or pro-biotic tablets along with your antibiotic. Call our office if you have any questions.

Women taking oral contraceptives: Antibiotics that you have received for your surgery may make your oral contraceptive less effective. You should use an alternate form of birth control until your normal menstrual cycle.

STITCHES (SUTURES):

Stitches have been placed to keep the skin edges together as the wound heals. In most cases, you will have stitches that will dissolve. In some cases, stitches will have to be removed. If necessary, your stitches will be removed 5-7 days after they have been placed.

SCARS:

Skin and other soft tissues heal by scar formation. Some scars are more noticeable than others. We can minimize scarring by careful wound repair and good wound care as healing occurs. Young (immature) scars are red and often raised. With time the redness will fade and the scar will become flatter. It takes up to a year for the color of the scar to more closely match that of adjacent uninjured skin. In spite of careful repair and good home care by the patient, some scars can be improved by revision after complete healing has occurred.

WOUND CARE:

CLEANING YOUR WOUNDS:

- **Peroxide:** Your wounds may develop a crust. Three (3) times per day, gently cleanse areas of crusting with peroxide and a Q-tip. Crusts will bubble off and may be whipped clean with a Q-tip. **DO NOT PICK CRUSTS OFF** as this may delay healing and leave a deeper and more noticeable scar.
- **Soap and Water:** 2-3 times per day gently wash your wounds with a mild soap, rinse and pat dry with a fresh towel.
- **Bacitracin Ointment:** After you clean the wound(s), apply a thin coat of ointment to the stitches. For the first week, a thin layer of ointment should coat the wound at all times to keep the area moist, help the stitches dissolve, prevent crusting and provide a more favorable environment for wound healing.

SHOWERING:

You may shower after 24 hours. Avoid direct water spray on the wound for the first few days as this may be painful and may cause the wound to open.

STERI-STRIPS:

These paper tape strips are to be applied across the wounds for six (6) weeks after the stitches have dissolved or have been removed to provide support to the healing wound(s). We will show you how to apply and remove this tape. You should apply them in the morning after you have washed and dried your face. Wear them all day long. Remove them at night to wash your face and then re-apply.

SILICONE SHEETING & GELS

After your stitches have been removed application of silicone sheeting or gels will help improve the appearance of the scar. The silicone should be worn for 2-3 months, 24 hours per day except during bathing. Please view the [Cimeosil website](#) to order products.

ACTIVITIES:

- **Sun Exposure:** It is very important that you avoid sun exposure to your wounds for 9 months. Your new wounds are unable to resist the damaging effects of the sun and may develop a brown “tattoo” – the area of the scar will be darker in color than the surrounding skin. Therefore, you must apply **daily** sunscreen (SPF 15 or greater) if you are to be in the sun. Also, protective clothing such as a wide-brimmed hat should be worn.
- **Swimming:** Prolonged periods of immersion in water will irritate young healing wounds. Therefore, wounds should be kept as dry as possible for the first month while swimming.

SCAR REVISIONS:

Some scars can be improved by scar revision after wound healing has occurred. There are three types of scar revision:

1. **Removing the Scar:** If a scar is very depressed and/or wide or has become very distorted during healing, it must first be removed. This is accomplished by cutting out the scar and putting the skin back together to allow for new healing. Usually we know by 6-10 weeks after the wound repair whether or not this type of revision will be necessary.
2. **Dermabrasion:** This is a surgical “sanding” or smoothing of skin edges to make them even and flat. It is done for thin scars with uneven edges that cast shadows which make them more noticeable. This is usually done 6-10 weeks after the initial wound repair or following removal of a scar.
3. **Steroid Injection:** Some scars have a tendency to become wide or develop thick edges. Often these can be improved by injecting a small amount of steroid into the scar itself. This is done 4-6 weeks after wound repair and may be repeated at 3-4 week intervals as needed.

QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS:

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have any questions or concerns about your progress please call the office (303) 444-2255. We are available 24 hours a day.

Thank you for trusting us with your oral and maxillofacial surgery needs.

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