



## Post-Operative Instructions Orthognathic (Jaw Surgery)

1. **Positioning:** For the first 7-10 days, it is best to keep your head elevated. When you return home from surgery, sit in a recliner, with your head elevated, place ice packs on your lower face, cheeks and chin or where you obtain comfort. (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off). Crushed ice in a "baggie" or frozen peas work well too. Ice is helpful up to 36 hours after surgery. After this time, use ice only if it feels good to do so. When sleeping, keep your head elevated above the level of your heart (you do not need to sleep sitting upright). Extra pillows under your head, or a blanket or two under the mattress works well.
2. **Bleeding/Cleaning:** Oozing from the nose is normal for the first few days after surgery. You will leave the office with a "mustache" dressing in place. Change the dressing as needed. When bleeding stops, you no longer will need this dressing. It is very important to maintain your good hygiene habits. Brushing your teeth beginning the night of surgery and rinsing your mouth after eating. You will begin gentle warm salt water rinses the day after the procedure which you will do several times throughout the day.
3. **Swelling/Bruising:** Swelling and bruising are normal body responses to surgery. Swelling usually peaks the second or third day after surgery then begins to decrease. Most swelling is gone in 10 days, but the remainder takes months to resolve. This bruising can last 7-14 days. By taking the medications as prescribed and carefully following these instructions, you will be doing everything possible to minimize swelling and bruising.
4. **Light exercise,** such as evening walks, can begin the day following surgery. Do not lift heavy objects, bend over, or return to strenuous activity until instructed by Dr. Guyette or his staff. On average, moderate exercise can begin 7-10 days after surgery and vigorous exercise 3-4 weeks after surgery.
5. **Good nutrition and proper hydration** is very important in optimizing healing after surgery. Make sure you maintain a well balanced diet. During the first few weeks your opening will be very limited, due to orthodontic bands in place to guide your bite. This will also limit your function of chewing. During the initial recovery period you will be using syringes that will be given to you by our office and used with liquid only foods this includes anything blended into liquid form. Avoid anything with seeds, nuts and any other small particles as these can get caught in the incision lines. Dr. Guyette/Dr. Beehner will instruct you what you may eat based on your healing process. Otherwise do not begin biting/chewing until instructed otherwise.
6. If you are able to take Ibuprofen, take over-the-counter Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) 200 mg tablets, 3 tablets, 4 times a day, for 3-7 days after surgery. . You may take Ibuprofen alone or take the prescription pain medication with Ibuprofen at the same time, if necessary. Be sure to eat prior to taking your medications. Do not drive for 4 hours after taking narcotic medications