



MIDDLE GEORGIA
ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL
SURGERY

Post-Operative Instructions Following a Biopsy

During an *incisional* biopsy, a small piece of tissue (soft or bony) is removed. During an *excisional* biopsy, the entire “lesion” is removed. After any type of biopsy, the tissue is then sent to a pathology laboratory for microscopic examination and diagnosis. Once a diagnosis is made, either no further treatment is needed or occasionally, more surgery may be recommended by Dr. Smalley.

To help your biopsy site heal properly:

- Begin with OTC pain relievers before the local anesthesia wears off and we recommend Tylenol®, Motrin®, Advil®, or Aleve®. Avoid aspirin as this may encourage bleeding or oozing.
- Minor bleeding is normal for sometimes 24-48 hours after a biopsy, but should decrease with time.
- If you were given gauze to apply pressure to the site, put direct, constant pressure with the gauze for 1 hour then reapply hourly until bleeding has stopped. It is sometimes helpful to bite on damp gauze, gauze dampened in a strongly steeped but cool black tea (Lipton®, Salada®), or place a dampened tea bag against the site for 30 minutes. Black tea contains tannic acid which helps with clotting.
- Avoid hot liquids, using drinking straws or sharp foods (chips, pizza crust, bread) for at least 24 hours.
- Be careful eating until the local anesthesia has worn off to avoid traumatizing the biopsy site or biting your lip or tongue.
- Avoid pulling on tongue or lips if these sites were biopsied or touching the biopsy site with your fingers as this may open the wound and cause an infection.
- Brush your teeth normally but avoid rinsing for 24 hours to allow the site to form a clot.
- After 24 hours, begin rinsing 3 times a day with warm saltwater. Do not use any mouthwashes that have not been prescribed. Peroxide rinses and mouthwashes that contain alcohol are detrimental to healing so use saltwater only.
- Do NOT smoke anything for 48-72 hours.
- Stitches are usually dissolvable and typically dissolve in 5 to 7 days.
- Sometimes the biopsy area is covered with a wound dressing (Perio Pack) or a chemical which may discolor the area (silver nitrate) but will disappear when the wound has healed. If a packing is used, it may fall off before your follow up visit so do not be alarmed. If placed, be gentle to the packing for it will act as a “bandage” over the biopsy site.
- Good oral hygiene in most cases prevents infections but if the site becomes redder, swollen or tender by post-op day 5, please come in for an evaluation and to rule out an infection.
- Biopsy patients are usually asked to follow up 7-14 days after the procedure to review the results and discuss whether any further treatment is needed.

Please call the office (478-353-3053) with any questions.