

What to expect after dental treatment

If fillings are deep, the teeth will hurt when cold or hot food or drink touches them. This sensitivity will disappear over the next few weeks.

The gums and mouth may be red and sensitive and the jaw may ache for a day or so.

The lips and inside of the mouth may look swollen and puffy. This goes away in a day or two.

Some children have a sore nose for a day or two. This is from a tube in the nostril during the anesthetic.

Discuss pain medication for your child with your doctor before you leave the hospital. Usually acetaminophen (called Tempra or Tylenol or a drug store brand) or Ibuprofen (e.g. Motrin) helps ease any pain or discomfort.

After extractions

Bleeding:

Your child may bleed a little for up to 24 hours. Put a clean gauze pad or clean face cloth over the bleeding area and have your child bite (not chew) on the pad for at least 20 minutes. This usually helps to stop bleeding.

It is better if your child does not spit, drink through a straw, rinse the mouth or brush teeth until the following day. These can start a bleed.

Cleaning:

A clean mouth helps to prevent infection and keeps teeth and gums healthy. Show your child how to brush the teeth and gums gently with a soft toothbrush the day or so after surgery (or when your dentist recommends it.) The area around the stitches may be sore so clean this area by rinsing the mouth with warm salt water. Use ½ teaspoon of salt in 1-cup of warm water. Start rinsing the next day. Once the gums heal your child can brush his/her teeth again as usual. The gums may bleed a little at first but with regular brushing and rinsing they will heal.

Stitches:

Stitches dissolve in a few days to two weeks. There is no need to have them taken out unless your dentist uses non-dissolving stitches.

Eating:

Some children are sick to their stomach after a general anesthetic. At first offer clear liquids, water or apple juice. Then give small amounts of very soft, easy to digest food till the day after surgery. Don't give any spicy food that might sting the gums.

The mouth may be numb from "freezing". Ask your child to chew carefully so that s/he avoids biting the lips and tongue.

If your child has a crown or space maintainer ask him/her not to chew toffee, chewing gum, licorice or ice. These shift the crown or maintainer out of position.

Other concerns or questions?

If your child is a patient of the BC Children's Hospital Dental Clinic, please call: 604-875-2114 (Office hours 8 am to 3 pm, Mon. - Fri.)

Your Family Doctor:

For Questions about your child's surgery call the surgeon:

Dr. _____

If you are worried about your child's condition bring him/her to:

Emergency Department

604-875-2345 ext 7258
Open 24 hours

Notes:

At BC Children's Hospital we believe parents are partners on the health care team. We want you to be as informed as possible.

This brochure will answer some of your questions. Please ask about things you do not understand, and share your concerns.

Developed by the health care professionals of the Daycare Surgery & Emergency with assistance from the Department of Learning & Development

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Helping Your Child After Dental Treatment



An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

4480 Oak Street, Vancouver BC, V6H 3V4
604-875-2345
1-888-300-3088
www.bcchildrens.ca