

Dr Alan Samakeh

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ORAL and MAXILLOFACIAL SURGEON

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Post-Operative Instructions – Orbital and mid-face fractures

Post operative care after surgery is important to optimise the healing process and reduce complications. Please read the following instructions carefully and contact our rooms if you have any queries.

Immediately following surgery:

When you wake up in recovery there will be sutures and overlying dressings over any facial skin wounds. Please keep your head dry and the dressings intact for 5 days following your procedure.

You will also wake up in recovery with blurriness in your vision due to the eye ointment used during your procedure. This will improve over the next 24 hours as you use the prescribed eye drops. You may also notice bleeding from your nose. Please wipe any nasal discharge, but do not blow your nose for at least 2 weeks following your surgery.

You may have difficulty feeling your nose, lips, cheeks, and palate due to numbness from the local anaesthetic administered during your surgery. This will wear off within 24 hours. Please take care not to bite your lips, cheeks and gums. The facial and oral numbness will gradually improve over a 3-6 month period.

Unless otherwise indicated by your surgeon, you may maintain a normal diet following your surgery.

Restrict your activities on the day of surgery and return to normal activities slowly. Your regular food and liquid intake has been reduced during and after your surgery, so you may get light headed, dizzy or weak. Place intermittent ice packs on the outside of the face (20 minutes on, 15 minutes off) as continuously as tolerable for the first 48 hours to decrease swelling. Make sure to get lots of rest on the day of your surgery. Avoid smoking and alcohol during the first 2 weeks after your surgery.

Bleeding:

Slight bleeding and redness from your eyes, nose and facial wounds are normal in the first few days after your surgery. If excessive bleeding continues, please call our rooms or your nearest Public Hospital Emergency Department immediately.

Swelling:

Swelling is normal after any surgical procedure, including the face. The swelling will usually reach its maximum extent in 3 days, and gradually reduce thereafter. Persistent swelling after this time may indicate a post-operative infection, which should be reported to our rooms immediately. To help with post-operative swelling, use cold packs (as highlighted above), avoid lying flat and sit upright for the first 24-48 hours after your surgery.

Pain:

Please take your prescribed pain killers as discussed with your doctor to help with post-operative pain. Pain not controlled by medications should be reported to our rooms. Continue to take the prescribed pain medications as directed and as needed for pain relief.

Infection:

As highlighted above, swelling in the first 3-7 days represents normal post-operative inflammation. Ongoing or worsening swelling after this time can indicate post-operative infection. Other signs of infection include swelling that is painful, hard, hot, difficulty opening your mouth and/or a fever above 38°C. Post-operative infection is a serious complication and should be reported to our rooms immediately. Hospital admission may be required in some cases.

Nausea and vomiting:

After a general anaesthetic, you may feel nauseated and vomit. To help avoid this, do not take your medications on an empty stomach. Try to stay hydrated with liquids. You may sometimes feel nauseated from the prescribed opioid pain killers such as codeine or oxycodone. If this is the case try stopping the pain medications. If you have continued nausea and vomiting, please call our rooms for further instructions.

Facial bruising and discolouration:

After facial surgery, you may notice bruising and/or discolouration around your eyes and jaws. You may also notice the bruising migrate down your neck and chest with time. This is a normal post-operative healing processes and should subside after 2 weeks.

Sutures (stitches):

Your sutures will dissolve on their own 2 weeks after surgery.

Questions:

Your well-being is our primary concern. It is our sincere desire that your experience be the least uncomfortable or anxiety provoking. Should you have any questions regarding your recovery, please do not hesitate to contact our office on 1300 49 49 79, or your surgeon Dr Alan Samakeh directly on 0438 665 760. In the event of an unexpected admission to a hospital related to treatment provided by Dr Alan Samakeh, please contact us directly.