

If you have any questions please call the office 804-354-1600, or for after hours assistance, call the answering service at 1-866-420-8819.

Sinus Precautions

What is the reason for sinus precautions?

Upper teeth near the back of the upper jaw are usually very close to the maxillary sinuses, which are air-filled cavities beneath your eyes and behind your cheekbones. An occasional complication of removing upper molar (back) teeth is exposure of the sinus floor. Most exposures will heal spontaneously or with minimal intervention as long as the following instructions are strictly adhered to after the surgery.

Some intermittent nose bleeding from the side of the surgery is a normal occurrence. Please do not be alarmed.

Helpful instructions of things to do and not to do if you have a sinus opening:

Do **NOT** blow your nose vigorously for two weeks. There is a natural opening between your nose and sinus. Any positive pressure in your nose will be directly transferred to the sinus and subsequently through the exposure to the fresh extraction site. If you feel “stuffed up”, over the counter decongestants such as Claritin D, Drixoral, Dimetapp, or Sudafed may help reduce pressure in the sinuses. If you become congested and do need to blow your nose, do the following; place a tea bag or gauze over the surgical site, bite down firmly, and gently blow your nose to clear the congestion.

Please keep your tongue away from the fresh surgical site. As the swelling subsides, the stitches may loosen up.

Do **NOT** use straws for two weeks. The negative pressure generated from the straw will lead to breakdown of the blood clot.

Do **NOT** smoke for two to three weeks. Smoking has a very profound effect on oral wounds, since the effect of the smoke is in direct contact with the healing wound. Wound breakdown and poor healing are more prevalent in smokers than in nonsmokers.

When sneezing, please do so with your mouth open, and do not sneeze holding your nose. The generated pressure must be released without transmitting to your sinuses.

Anything that causes pressure in your nasal cavity must be avoided. Avoid “bearing down”—as when lifting heavy objects, blowing up balloons, playing musical instruments that require a blowing action or any other activity that increases nasal or oral pressure. Scuba diving and flying in pressurized aircraft may also increase sinus pressure and should be avoided.

MOST IMPORTANT:

Failure to adhere to these instructions could result in a permanent opening (fistula) between your mouth and your sinus. This would require an additional surgery and recovery time. Prevention is always the most prudent option.

Other instructions specific to you: _____
