



Idaho Falls Oral & Facial Surgery  
Riley J. Hicks, D.D.S.

### **Directions for Optimal Healing after Jaw or Facial Fractures**

**Rest and Nutritious Foods:** Resting and eating nutritious foods are essential for healing to begin and progress normally. High calorie and high protein foods are ideal for the first few days. Drink extra non-carbonated fluids to avoid dehydration, especially the day of your surgery. Avoid hot foods while still numb from the anesthesia. You may be on a liquid diet because your jaws are wired together. If so, you will need 4-6 meals per day to meet your nutritional requirements. Liquid supplements like Ensure are an extra help. If your jaws are not wired together you should eat a soft diet, nothing firmer than scrambled eggs or pasta type foods for the next four weeks.

**Control your Pain:** Pain control is best obtained and maintained when you use your pain medicines prior to the local anesthesia wearing off. It is wise to eat some food prior to the taking this medicine as well. Take your medicine on a scheduled basis the first day-every four to six hours. You should realize that no pain medicine removes your pain sensation completely but lessens it so as to be tolerable. You may also use Ibuprofen as a second pain medicine. Follow the Ibuprofen label directions. Do not take extra Tylenol; it is already mixed with your narcotic pain medication. If adequate pain control isn't obtained please call us.

If you are prescribed an antibiotic use it as directed until it is gone.

**Oral and Facial Hygiene:** Oral hygiene is essential to help avoid infections. If your teeth are wired together you can only clean the outside of your teeth. Brushing twice per day is essential and should include teeth and wires around the teeth too. Water rinses can be used after each meal. Use your antibiotic mouth wash twice per day after brushing. Do not use ultrasonic or powered brushes for two weeks.

If you have facial lacerations or skin incisions they should be cleaned twice daily with a Q-tip dipped in Hydrogen Peroxide. Do this to remove any clotted or dried blood. Then cover the wound with a thin layer of antibiotic ointment. This cleaning practice should be done for the first week and then discontinue it. . Those placed on the skin will need to be removed 5-6 days after your surgery.

**Swelling:** Keep your head elevated while laying down or sleeping (Head above Heart). This will help minimize your swelling from the surgery. Swelling will be experienced to the magnitude of your surgery, bigger trauma=bigger surgery=bigger swelling. It will be at its greatest on day 3-4 after surgery.

**Activity:** You must be cautious to avoid further injury to your jaws and face. Bumps from others may cause movement of your fractured bones and then require further surgery. You may return to work after your strength is adequate and you are not taking narcotic pain medicines. If you desire to exercise, a stationary bike can be used after one week and running or jogging after three weeks. No contact sports should be played for three months.