

CHAD PURNELL M.D.

CRANIOFACIAL AND PLASTIC SURGERY

Pre-and postoperative care instructions Facial fracture repair

Before the Operation:

- Follow the instructions given to you by our scheduler regarding eating and drinking. Try as much as possible to show up early.

Hospital Stay: Usually, hospital stay after facial fracture surgery is outpatient or 1 night in the hospital, depending on how extensive your fracture is.

After the Operation: Every facial fracture is different and you will receive specific instructions related to your fracture in clinic and on the day of surgery. These are general guidelines.

- Incision care:
 - **For the incisions in the mouth, cleanliness is very important.** You will use the Peridex medicated mouthwash twice a day for the first two weeks, then transition to regular mouthwash. After eating or drinking anything, you should swish with warm water to keep everything clean. You should brush their teeth at least 2 times a day with a soft bristle toothbrush starting 3 days after surgery. Make sure to look at your incisions and if there is food stuck near them, gently clean it out with a soft toothbrush or waterpick.
 - **For incisions on the face:** apply bacitracin ointment or erythromycin ointment to the incisions 3 times a day. After 2 weeks, you may begin regular scar treatments for which you can find instructions [HERE](#). The majority of incisions are closed with absorbable sutures and these do not need to be removed.
- Pain Control: For the first 2-3 days, it is usually easier to **schedule** non-opioid pain medications rather than waiting to see if you need them.
 - You can take acetaminophen every 6 hours and ibuprofen (Motrin) every 6 hours, so you will get a medication every 3 hours. If this is not relieving the pain, you may add a dose of oxycodone.
 - The vast majority of patients only require opioid medication for the first 2-3 days after fracture surgery. **Opioid medications can result in you being more sleepy, eating and drinking poorly, and can cause constipation.** They should only be used if necessary.
- Other Medications: You should use saline nasal spray at least twice daily to keep your nose clean after surgery if your nose was part of the operation. You will continue the Peridex mouthwash for 2 weeks postoperatively.

- Diet: You will drink liquids for the first 1-2 nights after the operation, and then can transition to a soft diet. A soft diet includes anything you can squish with your fingers, such as scrambled eggs, noodles, smoothies, and milkshakes. **If it hurts to eat something – don't eat it.** NO CRUNCHY FOOD or food that is difficult to chew for 4-6 weeks, depending on your fracture.
- Activity: No contact sports or activities where you can be hit in the face or fall for 8 weeks after surgery. **Do not blow your nose drink through a straw for 2 weeks. If you have to sneeze, keep your mouth open.** No heavy lifting (over 10 lbs) for 2 weeks. **No lifting that causes you to strain or grind your teeth for 4 weeks.** You can use saline nasal spray if your nose is dry or irritated. Elastic bands given to you after surgery should be kept in place and replaced if they break. **Sleep with your head elevated for the first 2 weeks. This will significantly decrease swelling and pain.**
- Bathing: You may shower normally with soap and water. This can be done as early as the day after the operation.
- Follow-up appointments: Patients are typically seen 2 weeks after the operation. Depending on how complicated your fractures were, you may be seen again at 4 weeks or may return in 3 months.
- Special Instructions for specific fractures:
 - **If your jaw is wired shut** or has tight elastics, you should always carry wire cutters or scissors with you. These should be used to cut the wires/elastics in case of an emergency, such as you vomiting or choking.
 - **If you had an eye socket (orbital) fracture repair**, watching for vision problems is extremely important. If you are having worsening eye pain or any changes in vision, let us know immediately or come to the emergency department.
 - **Numbness** is present after almost every fracture repair. This often takes greater than 1 month to resolve. Tell Dr. Purnell about any numbness you have at your next outpatient appointment.

Things to let us know about:

- **Call the Office if:**
- You develop a temperature of **over 101 degrees** Fahrenheit (38.3 degrees Celsius) – it is not necessary to check temperatures after surgery unless you feel like something is wrong.
- You have **increasing redness, pain, weeping fluid, or swelling** at their surgical site. Swelling is normal for the first few days after surgery, but if swelling returns we would like to know.
- **If you have any vision problems we want to know immediately.**
- If you have **severe pain that is not controlled by pain medication.**
- **If you have any concerns or questions**, contact us. We are used to receiving questions from parents and can help you decide if something is normal or abnormal after surgery.

Contact Information:

IF YOU ARE SEEN AT UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-CHICAGO:

- Main Hospital: 312-996-7546
- Outpatient nurses: Alma Moya, RN Med 312-996-2512 Linda Duffy 312-996-4119
- Appointment Scheduling: 312-996-7546
- Surgery scheduling: 312-996-9313
- EMERGENCIES: 911

IF YOU ARE SEEN AT SHRINERS HOSPITALS FOR CHILDREN:

- Main hospital: 773-622-5400
- Inpatient Unit: 773-385-5590
- Nurse practitioners: Marisa Foss, CNP: 773-385-5597, mfoss@shrinenet.org (Tues-Fri) Patty Engebretson, CNP: 773-385-5595, pengebretson@shrinenet.org (Mon, Tues, Thurs)
- Outpatient clinic nurses: Jill McGuigan, RN and Sandy Ritt, RN: 773-385-5503
- Care coordination: Tina Magnole, LCSW: 773-385-5826 and Krista Bauman, LSW: 773-385-5560
- EMERGENCIES: 911