

CAROLINA ORAL & FACIAL SURGERY P.A.

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Management of Muscle Soreness After Surgery

It is not unusual to feel some jaw muscle tightness or soreness after dental extractions--especially if you tend to grind and clench, or if a little extra care was needed to remove teeth. This type of discomfort may present as stiffness, aching, or difficulty opening your mouth fully. It is generally temporary and should improve gradually with gentle and appropriate care over several days.



Heat Therapy: Use a warm compress (like a moist washcloth or heating pad) on your cheeks or jaw area. Apply for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off as needed (especially before bed and in the morning).



Diet: Dehydration and poor nutrition can worsen soreness. Drink plenty of water and eat soft, nutritious foods (smoothies, soups, oatmeal, mashed potatoes, etc.).



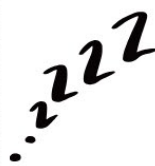
Medications: Over-the-counter medications like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) help reduce inflammation and relieve muscle aches. Take medications as directed by your doctor or pharmacist. Avoid narcotic pain medication as it may mask symptoms and worsen your discomfort.



Gentle Range of Motion Stretching (3-5 days after surgery):
Open and close your mouth.
Move your jaw side to side.
Do a few repetitions a couple of times a day.
This helps to prevent long-term stiffness.



Massage Gently: After a couple of days, gently massaging the jaw area can help release tension. Use small, circular motions over the sore muscles.



Avoid Overuse and Rest: Allow your body time to heal. Limit chewing tough or sticky foods. Avoid gum or clenching your teeth. Talk and yawn gently during the early healing period.

Please be patient during your recovery. It can take several days to a week before you are ready to return to your regular diet. We recommend that you wait until you have been completely symptom-free for at least **3 days** before gradually progressing your diet.

Please contact us at 864.458.9800 with any questions.