

# Jaw surgery or fractured jaw

***“Routine Post Operative Instructions following Oral Surgery”* should be followed, in addition to these special instructions unique to your surgery.**

## EXTERNAL FIXATION OF JAWS

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Your jaws may be held shut for a period of 2 – 6 weeks. This allows the jaw bones time to start healing and refusing together. The jaws are held in a closed position with the use of orthodontic elastics. If elastics break or loose their tension you should replace them with the elastics provided. **Do not purposely try to open your mouth or strain against the elastics.** This could cause the unhealed jaw bones to move, resulting in further complications.

Wires from the external fixation may cause sore or raw areas inside your mouth. Wax has been provided for you to cover any wires causing discomfort during your healing.

Scissors have been provided; carry these with you at all times. If you are sick and throwing up, or have difficulty breathing it may be necessary to cut the elastics to free your jaws. In the event of this happening it will be necessary for you to return to our clinic to have the elastics reapplied and to ensure correct positioning of your fractured jaw is maintained.

## DIET AND NUTRITION

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**You will receive a dietary pamphlet on the day of your surgery.**

A liquid diet will be required while you're in fixation. You should be drinking 2 – 3 liters of fluids as well as ingesting the equivalent of 3 meals a day in order to keep yourself well hydrated and give your body the nutrition it requires to heal. You will be provided with a large syringe which aids in ingestion of blenderized foods. Liquids may include juices, pop, shakes, high energy or protein drinks, Ensure™, Boost™, or your homemade mixtures.

It is not uncommon to see up to a 10% drop in body weight if a person is in fixation for a period of 6 weeks.

**Absolutely No Alcohol to be ingested while jaws are wired shut.**

## ORAL HYGIENE

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**PROPER ORAL HYGIENE IS ESSENTIAL TO REDUCE INFECTION AND ENHANCE HEALING.**

Use the syringe provided routinely after every meal to flush the mouth of food debris after eating. Fill the syringe with tap water, then direct it over the teeth, wires, elastics and gums; flush the area as necessary. You may notice food debris being washed from the mouth for a period of time. This is normal. Rinse with the syringe until no food debris is present.

Lip care is imperative when your jaws are wired shut. Vaseline or lip balm should be applied frequently to keep the lips from drying and cracking.

## FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT

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You will be provided with a return appointment date on the day of your surgery. It is important you attend this appointment to assess proper healing of your fractured jaw. If you require a change to your scheduled appointment, please contact our office.

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**If you have any questions or problems, do not hesitate to call our office at 454-6565 or 1-800-379-9474.** If your call is not answered by the answering service, hang up and call again in five minutes. We apologize for this inconvenience as the lines may be occupied by other callers. There is an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon on call **ALL HOURS OF THE DAY.**

**WE PREFER THAT YOU CALL OUR OFFICE FIRST RATHER THAN YOUR OWN DENTIST OR FAMILY DOCTOR. However, if you are experiencing severe bleeding or breathing problems requiring IMMEDIATE ATTENTION, please proceed to the nearest Emergency Department or Dial 911.**