

Post-Operative Complication	How Long Will it Last and <i>When Do I Call the Dentist?</i>	What Can I Do to Prevent or Decrease the Complication?
Bleeding	Usually 24 hours, but only minor oozing after 4 hours Call if bleeding is constant and heavy and doesn't seem to be decreasing	Bite on a gauze or moist tea bag (change every half hour until bleeding stops) Limit activity for 12 hours No sucking straws or smoking for 24 hours
Pain	Peaks at 12 hours Rarely longer than 2 days Call if pain persists beyond 2 days and/or if pain medication is not helping	Keep head elevated and cover the pillow with a cloth to absorb any bleeding Take the prescribed medication and follow the instructions given on the bottle
Swelling	Maximum swelling is seen at days 2-3 Subsides within 1 week Call if swelling still enlarges after day 3	Day 1 - Use a cold pack for 20 min. on/ 20 min. off throughout the day Day 2 - Do nothing Day 3 - Warm pack can be used to decrease swelling
Bruising	Occurs soon after and lasts for approximately a week No need to call—your body will take care of the bruising	Nothing—your body will take care of the bruise
Sore Jaw	Can last up to 7 to 10 days Call if jaw muscles are tender or if your mouth is still hard to open after 7 to 10 days	Massage your jaw gently with a warm moist facecloth Eat foods that are easy to chew such as eggs, pasta or bananas
Dry Socket (Severe Pain When the Blood Clot Over Surgical Area Does Not Form Properly)	Occurs approximately 3 to 4 days after surgery Call if pain begins on day 3 or 4, and medications cannot control it	Do not smoke or suck through a straw for 24 hours