

# Postoperative Mandible Fracture Instructions

*Dr. Healy - Dr. Keele - Dr. Tubbs - Dr. Ramsey*

## Contact Information:

- **Glacier Ear Nose and Throat - (406) 752-8330**
  - 9am to 5pm, Monday-Friday
  - After 5 pm and weekends, an "on call" provider is available.
- **The HealthCenter - (406) 751-7550**

## When should I call my doctor?

- If I am worried, my doctor is worried! I will call my doctor's office.
- If I have signs of an infection, like a fever above 101.5 degrees or drainage from my incisions, I will call my doctor.
- If I have nausea or vomiting that is not relieved with medicine, I will call my doctor.
- If I have to cut my wires in an emergency, I will call my doctor immediately.
- If I am short of breath or have chest pain with no activity, I will call my doctor's office.

## What should I expect after surgery?

- My jaw may be wired shut.
- I will always keep my wire cutters with me in case of an emergency.
- I have absorbable stitches that do not need removed.

## When will I see my doctor?

- I need to have a follow-up appointment with my doctor in 3 to 4 weeks after surgery.
- My bars and wires will be removed about 1 month after surgery.

## What about my pain?

- I will have some discomfort.
- I may use ice packs to my face to help with swelling and pain.
- I may use over the counter Ibuprofen or Tylenol.
- I may be given a prescription for narcotic pain medication if Ibuprofen and Tylenol is not enough.
  - I will not take extra Tylenol if I am taking Norco, Lortab or Percocet because they have Tylenol in it.
  - I will not drive if I am taking narcotic pain medication.
  - Narcotic pain medication may cause constipation. I will drink extra fluids and I may need a stool softener.
- I will follow pain medication instructions given by my nurse or pharmacist.

## What should I expect after surgery?

- If my jaw is not wired shut I may eat food that does not require chewing for 2 - 3 weeks.
- If my jaw is wired shut, I can eat anything I can take through a straw.
- High energy high nutrient diet shakes, like Boost or Ensure, are recommended.

### **What if I have nausea or vomiting?**

- If I am nauseated I will take anti-nausea medication.
- If I need to vomit I can cut my vertical wires. This should only be done in an emergency.
- I will call my doctor immediately if I had to cut my wires.

### **How do I care for my surgical site?**

- I may gently brush my teeth.
- I will take my antibiotics until they are gone to prevent an infection.
- I will rinse my mouth twice daily, for 1 week after surgery, with the Peridex solution given to me.
- I will not use Peridex for more than 1 week or it may stain my teeth.
- I may use over the counter saline, or salt water, to rinse my mouth 3 times a day to keep my wires clean.
- If my wires hurt my gums, I can use dental wax over the sharp edges.