

Let's Talk About...

Dental Restorations or Removals

Dental care is a normal part of childhood. Your child may have fillings, teeth removed, teeth cleaned, fluoride treatments, crowns, or caps. After the procedures, you will need to help your child take care of her teeth. This will protect the procedure.

Diet

What can my child eat?

Your child should avoid eating anything sticky, hard, or chewy for one day. Offer her soft foods like yogurt, macaroni and cheese, noodles, scrambled eggs, pudding or applesauce.

What should I do about nausea and vomiting?

Sedation from the procedure, car movement, and pain medicine can all cause nausea and vomiting. You can control nausea and vomiting by having your child lie quietly and decrease movement. You should also wait to have your child drink until she feels less sick. At times it is impossible to prevent vomiting. If your child vomits, wait until her stomach has settled down (about 30 minutes after vomiting), then have her take small sips of clear liquids every 5 to 10 minutes. If your child is under 2 years old, try giving her water, apple juice, or Pedialyte®. If she is older, try Gatorade®, Jell-O®, decaffeinated Coke®, or 7-UP®. Help your child drink every 15 to 30 minutes, but don't force it. If the nausea returns, wait another 30 minutes and try again. Once your child has stopped feeling sick, begin giving solid foods.

How will I know if my child is drinking enough?

After the procedure, your child may have low body fluids. Some signs of not having enough to drink include dark yellow urine, a dry mouth (no spit),

chapped lips, and the soft spot on your baby's head sinking inwards. If you notice any of these, give your child more to drink. She should urinate (pee) normally within 24 hours after the procedure. A baby should have 6 to 8 wet diapers in a 24-hour period. An older child should urinate every 6 to 8 hours.

Pain

How can I tell if my child is in pain?

No surgery is pain free, but it is important for your child to be comfortable so she can heal. If she is older, you can talk to her about her pain. If your child is younger or developmentally delayed, she may moan, whimper, make a face of pain, cry, be irritable, be inactive, not eat, or not sleep. In all cases, you should comfort your child and listen to her concerns.

How can I help with my child's pain?

It is important to offer comfort and listen to your child's concerns. Alternating Children's Tylenol with children's ibuprofen around the clock will be most effective in relieving your child's pain.

A cold cloth or an ice bag placed on your child's cheek will help with pain.

Use the space below to write down questions you may have before you go home.

Wound Care

With tooth removal, a small amount of bleeding and drainage is normal. Usually a blood clot forms in the empty socket and stops the blood from flowing. If your child drinks through a straw or rinses her mouth very hard, she could dislodge the clot and start bleeding again. For the first few days, have your child rinse her mouth gently. When she brushes her teeth, have her avoid the teeth close to the empty

socket. Have your child bite on a gauze pad to help the extraction site clot, if she's old enough to do this. Replace the gauze every 1 to 2 hours as needed.

Behavior

What is normal behavior after surgery?

It is very normal to see behavior changes after surgery. If the changes last longer than 3 to 4 weeks, call your pediatrician. Some examples of changes include regression (bed wetting or acting out), changes in sleep and eating patterns, or nightmares. Be patient with your child. This will help reduce these changes. Understand that your child has been upset by surgery. Most changes in behavior only last a few days to 2 weeks.

Activity

How active can my child be?

In general, avoid any activity that causes pain to the mouth area. Surgery often affects children's coordination. To keep your child safe, it is important to follow these guidelines:

- Do not let your child walk without help.
- Do not let your child climb ladders, go down slides, climb on jungle gym equipment, ride a bike, ride a scooter, snowboard, or roller blade.
- Do not allow teenagers or young adults to drive a car or operate anything that requires quick decisions.

When should I call the doctor?

Call your doctor or nurse, if your child has any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature over 101 °F
- Increased swelling
- Bleeding that won't stop
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Uncontrolled pain
- Signs of dehydration (dry mouth, less than 6–8 wet diapers, lack of tears)
- Excessive diarrhea or constipation
- Chest pain or shortness of breath: **Go to the Emergency Department or call 911!**

How do I call the doctor?

Call your dentist's office at 801.662.3900 during office hours, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and speak to the nurse. If the office is closed, call the operator at Primary Children's Hospital, 801.662.1000, and ask for the Dental Resident. You can reach the resident at any time.

Follow-up appointment

Call your dentist's office as soon as possible to make a follow-up appointment.

For further questions, access our Internet site at: www.primarychildrens.com then click on the Kids Health icon. (A Primary Children's Medical Center partnered online health resource for families.)