

INSTRUCTIONS AFTER AN ORAL BIOPSY

What to expect today

- The site may be a little sore today and tomorrow. Start pain relievers BEFORE your anesthesia wears off (usually within 2-3 hours). You may take Extra-strength Tylenol™ or any other painkillers that you would normally take to treat a headache. You should avoid taking aspirin or ibuprofen (such as Motrin™ or Advil™) since this may cause bleeding from the biopsy site.
- You may experience some mild bleeding from the biopsy site and your saliva may be blood-tinged. If you notice bleeding from the biopsy site, use the sterile gauze given to you. Dampen 2-3 pieces of gauze, fold and apply with pressure against the site for 15-20 minutes. You may also use a tea-bag (black tea such as Lipton and Salada): dampen this in warm water, wring out the excess water and apply with pressure against the biopsy site for 15-20 minutes.
- You should avoid hot (temperature hot) foods today as well as spicy or sharp foods like toast, chips and popcorn, for your own comfort. However, do eat your meals and keep hydrated.
- Be careful about not biting the area of the biopsy site or areas that may be numb for several hours.
- Brush your teeth normally but avoid the biopsy site.
- You should not use a mouth rinse other than warm salt water. Don't rinse on the day of the procedure if possible; otherwise, rinse very gently only to remove food debris. You may also use a mouth rinse as instructed by the doctor who performed the biopsy.
- You should not smoke for at least 72 hours as this increases your chances of developing a wound infection.

Stitches

If stitches were placed, you may feel a few threads around the biopsy site. We use resorbable ("melting") stitches and these will fall out within 3-10 days. In some cases, the biopsy site may have been sealed with a chemical (such as silver nitrate) which appears black but this will disappear when the biopsy site heals.

Infection

This is a very uncommon complication. Soreness at the biopsy site is usually noticeable on the day of the procedure and much less noticeable the next day. If, however, by the 4th or 5th day, you notice the site is getting more red and sore, it is possible that you may have developed an infection. If so, please call your doctor at 617-732-6974.

Follow-up

Your doctor has either informed you that she/he will contact you with the results, or that you will return for a follow-up visit to discuss the biopsy results and/or to treat the condition.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your doctor at the Division of Oral Medicine and Dentistry, at 617-732-6974.