



Helping Hands

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INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING LOCAL ANESTHESIA

The most common side effect from local anesthesia in children is trauma to the lips, cheeks and tongue. This trauma is caused by the child biting or sucking on the soft tissues while parts of the mouth are numb from the local anesthesia. Children often find the numb feeling to be different, sometimes uncomfortable. They try to stop the numb sensations by biting or sucking the numb areas of the mouth which can cause sores and bruising after the anesthesia wears off.

If your child complains of a sore lip, cheek or tongue hours after the dental procedure or you notice swelling (occasionally severe) in the oral area, it is possible that your child caused trauma to his/herself when numb. The only treatment for sore tissues is Tylenol or Motrin for pain, according to dosing on the bottle of the product you are using, and letting the body heal the area on its own. It may help to have a soft, bland diet for several days. It can take up to 7-10 days for this area to fully heal.

This self-inflicted trauma is easily avoidable by monitoring your child after dental procedures when local anesthesia is used. After dental procedures we instruct your child to leave the area alone, but they often need adult supervision for a couple hours after the appointment. We recommend during this time to only eat softer foods, (i.e.; jello, pudding, yogurt, applesauce, cottage cheese, or ice cream). If you notice any biting, sucking, pinching or playing with tissue in the area that was numb, please explain to your child to leave the area alone while it feels "sleepy".