



Post-Operative Instructions Following Dental Extractions

After an extraction, it's important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. That's why we ask you to bite on a gauze pad for 30 to 45 minutes after an extraction. If bleeding or oozing continues after you remove the gauze pad, place another gauze pad and bite firmly for another thirty minutes. You may have to do this several times. If it still does not stop, run a tea bag under warm water and bite on that for 20 minutes. The tannins from the tea will help the blood clot form. If this does not work, call the office.

After the blood clot forms it is important to protect it especially for the next 24 hours.

So, for the first 24 hours, don't:

- Smoke
- Spit
- Suck through a straw
- Rinse your mouth vigorously
- Clean the teeth next to the extraction site

These activities will dislodge the clot and slow down healing. Limit yourself to calm activities for the first 24 hours, this keeps your blood pressure lower, reduces bleeding, and helps the healing process. If you are supervising children who have had an extraction done, make sure they don't bite on their numb lips or tongue (it can cause serious injury to their soft tissue).

Drink lots of fluid and eat only soft nutritious foods first the first two days after an extraction (soup, yogurt, milkshakes and juice). Don't use alcoholic beverages and avoid hot and spicy foods. Avoid any carbonated beverages. You can begin eating normally the next day or as soon as it is comfortable.

After the tooth is extracted you may feel some pain, bruising around your lips, and/or some swelling, especially after extraction of impacted wisdom teeth. Ice bag application and medication prescribed for you will help to minimize your discomfort. The swelling usually starts to go down after 48 hours.

Please take all the medication you have received based on the provided instructions. For pain, you should take 1 Ibuprofen 600mg tablet with 2 Extra Strength Tylenol (500mg each), every 4 hours for the first 24 hours. If the area is still bothersome after 24 hours, continue with the same regiment for the next 24 hours. If 48 hours after the extraction, the area is still bothersome, please call our office. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.

Gently rinse your mouth with salt water three times a day beginning the day after the extraction (a tsp of salt in a cup of warm water, rinse-swish-spit). Also, rinse gently after meals, it helps keep food out of the extraction site. It is very important to resume your normal dental routine after 24 hours; this should include brushing your teeth and tongue and flossing at least once a day. This speeds healing and helps keep your breath and mouth fresh.

Call us right away if you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling after two or three days, or a reaction to the medication. In case of serious emergencies call 911, or visit your closest hospital emergency. After a few days you will be feeling fine and can resume your normal activities.