



Post Operative Instructions after Extraction

How to care for your mouth after extraction

I am committed to providing the same quality of care following your procedure as you experienced during your visit. Please read over these general guidelines and aftercare instructions. Faithful compliance to these instructions will help ensure proper healing after your extraction. By all means, CALL at any hour of any day to report a continuing problem of lingering concern.

1. To Control Bleeding:

- a. For one hour, bite firmly on the gauze, which is placed at the extraction site.
- b. After one hour, remove the gauze and wait for a moment or two. Look at the extraction site area. If the extraction site continues to bleed, repeat step (a). If there is no bleeding, you do not have to replace and bite on gauze.
- c. Episodes of slight oozing are common for several days after the removal of teeth. Should bleeding restart, place a new gauze at the extraction site and repeat step (a) described above.
- d. If you run out of gauze, moisten a tea bag with water and bite on it. Tea is very helpful at stopping extraction sites from bleeding.
- e. Do not rinse your mouth or spit on the day of surgery. This may break up or loosen the blood clots and cause the extraction site to bleed again.
- f. After surgery, refrain from heavy lifting or strenuous physical activities. Avoid bending over and placing your head below your heart. These activities increase the blood pressure in your head and can cause the blood clot to dislodge from the extraction site. This will complicate the healing process and cause unnecessary pain.
- g. Avoid drinking through a straw or smoking, as the sucking action of these activities can make the bleeding persist due.

2. To Control Swelling:

- a. A cold compress should be applied as soon as possible after your surgery. A good cold compress can be made by placing ice and water in a Ziploc bag. Cover the Ziploc bag with a washcloth before applying it against your face. Using 20-minute intervals, place the cold compress on your face for 20 minutes, and then take it off for 20 minutes. This works well for the first 24-36 hours after surgery.
- b. Never use a hot water bottle or heating pad in the first 36 hours, as this will increase the swelling

3. To Control Pain:

- a. You can take 600 mg of ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) every 6 hours for 7 to 10 days after surgery. You may take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 500 mg every 6 hours at the same time as the Ibuprofen. These over-the-counter pain relievers will help minimize inflammation and reduce the need for prescription pain medication. Do not take the above medications if you are allergic to them or your physician has instructed you not to take them.
- b. Antibiotics, if prescribed, should be taken as directed until completely gone.
- c. If you take prescription medications for medical reasons, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, etc., please continue taking them on your normal scheduled time unless you are otherwise directed.

4. Smoking/Vaping: Nothing causes more problems to a healing extraction site than smoking/vaping.

- a. Smoking/vaping is known for causing “dry sockets”. A dry socket is a minor but extremely painful complication after an extraction. People who smoke have the highest frequency of dry sockets. Read the foot note concerning dry sockets.
- b. Therefore, **DO NOT SMOKE or VAPE** at all for the first 48 hours after an extraction. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

- c. During the first 14 days after an extraction follow this simple rule: “If your mouth hurts at all, don't smoke or vape!”

5. Eating:

- a. Sometimes a cool, soft diet may be necessary for the first few days following surgery. Most patients are able to resume regular food intake within a short time.
- b. Proper nutrition is vital to healing and should be started as soon as practical after surgery.
- c. Do not drink carbonated beverages, such as soda, beer, or champagne for the first 48 hours after surgery. The bubbles may interfere with the blood clotting and complicate the healing process.

6. Oral Hygiene: Please do not rinse your mouth out on the day of surgery.

- a. After 24 hours you may rinse your mouth out with a solution of 1/2 teaspoon of salt diluted in 8 ounces of warm water.
- b. Rinse thoroughly at least 3-4 times per day, especially after meals. Remember to start rinsing the day after surgery and continue to rinse for two to three weeks thereafter. Make sure that food debris is not trapped in the healing extraction site.
- c. Regular brushing and flossing may resume the day of surgery. Avoid the area of surgery with special caution.

7. Post-Aesthetic Instructions: Here are special instructions for those patients who underwent surgery with an intravenous anesthetic, or for those who have taken an oral sedative before surgery:

- a. Do not drive a car or operate any potentially dangerous machinery or equipment for 24 hours after surgery.
- b. Please refrain from strenuous activity, and rest for 24 hours after surgery.