



Post-Operative Instructions for Extractions and Oral Surgery

Follow these instructions carefully to ensure the successful healing of your tooth extraction or surgical site. The goal is to minimize the risk of post-surgical complications and to keep blood a clot in the socket to prevent bleeding and a painful complication known as a “Dry Socket”.

During the first 24 hours

- Bite on a gauze pad firmly for 30-90 minutes following your procedure. Blood and saliva mix in the mouth and make it look like there is more bleeding than there really is. Some oozing is normal; however, after 1 hour, repeat with a clean gauze pad if oozing is profuse. The site could ooze for as long as 24 hours.
- Begin eating soft foods (eggs, soups, noodles, ice cream, yogurt, etc.) after the bleeding has been controlled and the gauze has been removed.
- Don't spit, suck on candies, or suck through a straw for at least 1 week
- Don't rinse your mouth and don't brush or floss next to the surgical site.
- Don't smoke or use tobacco. Avoid tobacco for at least 1 week because it slows healing.
- Don't sneeze or cough, so have sinus or allergy medication on hand if necessary.
- Limit yourself to calm activities and elevate your head with pillows when you lie down to reduce bleeding.
- Don't drink hot, carbonated, or alcoholic drinks, and avoid hot or spicy foods.
- **To keep swelling to a minimum**, use an ice bag over the area, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.
- **When the numbness has worn off completely**, drink lots of fluids and eat only soft nutritious foods, chewing on the opposite side.
- **If antibiotics were prescribed**, begin to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone. Some antibiotics can interfere with the effectiveness of birth control pills or other medications.

- **To control discomfort**, take pain medication before the anesthetic has worn off or as recommended. Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. If you do not have an allergy or contraindication to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications like Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) we recommend taking this prior to the local anesthetic wearing off. More severe pain may require a narcotic pain medication. Alternate Ibuprofen and the narcotic medication to manage discomfort. First, take narcotic medication then a couple of hours later take 400 mg (2 tablets / 200mg) of Ibuprofen. *(Ibuprofen dosage may vary for younger patients. Please reference bottle for appropriate dosage based on height and weight). Alternate these medications as prescribed.*

While taking a narcotic pain medication you may not drive or operate mechanical machinery. The prescribed pain medication will make you drowsy. Once you feel like you can stop the narcotic, use Ibuprofen or Tylenol to manage any remaining discomfort. All medications should not exceed the recommended dosage.

NOTE: If you are taking an anticoagulant medication (Plavix, Coumadin, Xarelto, etc.), do NOT take Ibuprofen or Aspirin products.

After the first 24 hours

- **Begin to eat normally** as soon as it's comfortable.
- **Resume brushing and flossing**, but clean gently around the site for about a week.
- **Reduce soreness or swelling** by applying moist heat to side of face after 2 days. Swelling usually starts to go down after 48 hours.
- **Further reduce swelling** by rinsing your mouth very gently with warm salt water. Use about one teaspoon of salt per glass of warm water. Rinse two to three times a day for the week following the extraction.

When to call us

It is normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a tooth extraction, but call us right away if you have:

- Heavy or increased bleeding
- Pain or swelling that increases or continues beyond two or three days
- A bad taste or odor in your mouth
- A reaction to the medication
- Questions on how to manage the healing or discomfort