



## Postoperative Instructions for Extractions of Tooth/Teeth

- **DO NOT DISTURB THE WOUND.** In doing so you may invite irritation, infection and/or bleeding. Be sure to chew on the opposite side for **24 hours** and keep anything sharp from entering the wound (eating utensils, etc.)
- **DO NOT SMOKE FOR 12 HOURS.** Smoking will promote bleeding and interfere with healing.
- **BRUSHING: DO NOT** brush your teeth for the first **8 hours** after surgery. After, you may brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery.
- **MOUTH WASH:** Avoid all rinsing for **24 hours** after extraction. This is to insure the formation of a healing blood clot, which is essential to proper wound healing. Disturbance of this clot can lead to increased bleeding or the loss of the blood clot. If the clot is lost, a painful condition called dry socket may occur. You may use warm salt water or mild antiseptic rinses **after 24 hours** only if prescribed.
- **DO NOT SPIT OR SUCK THROUGH A STRAW.** This will promote bleeding and may dislodge the blood clot causing a dry socket.
- **BLEEDING:** When you leave the office, you will be given verbal instructions regarding the control of postoperative bleeding. A rolled up gauze pad will be placed on the extraction site, and you will be asked to change this dressing **every 20 minutes** or so depending on the amount of bleeding that is occurring. It is normal for some blood to ooze from the area of surgery. We will also give you a package of gauze to take with you to use at home if the bleeding should continue. Should you need to use the gauze at home, remember to roll it into a ball large enough to cover the wound. Hold firmly in place by biting or with finger pressure for about **20-30 minutes**. If bleeding still continues, you may fold a tea bag in half and bite down on it. Tea contains Tannic Acid which may help to reduce the bleeding.
- **PAIN:** Some discomfort is normal after surgery. Analgesic tablets (Advil, Tylenol, etc.) may be taken under your dentist's direction. Prescription medication, which may have been given to you, should also be taken as directed. If pain continues, call your dentist.
- **SWELLING:** To prevent swelling, apply an ice pack or a cold towel to the outside of your face in the area of the extraction during the first **12 hours**. Apply alternately, **20 minutes on then 20 minutes off**, for an hour or longer if necessary.
- **DIET:** Eat normal regular meals as soon as you are able after surgery. Cold, soft foods such as ice cream or yogurt may be the most comfortable for the first day. **It is also important to drink plenty of fluids.**

**REPORT ANY UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES IMMEDIATELY.**

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