

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS – EXTRACTIONS

Follow these instructions to promote healing & minimize discomfort, bleeding and swelling.

DAY OF SURGERY:

- Bite on a gauze pad to control bleeding. Keep slight pressure on this gauze for at least 30 minutes to allow time for the clot to form in the extraction socket. If bleeding continues, bite on a fresh gauze pad for an additional 30 minutes. If bleeding persists, dampen a teabag with water and bite on it for 30 minutes. Blood-tinged saliva is normal & may be noticed for 1-2 days following surgery. Cover your pillow with an old towel to avoid staining your pillowcases.
- Keep your head elevated throughout the day of surgery; this will help minimize swelling.
- Control swelling by applying ice on the cheek at regular intervals (*15 minutes on, 15 minutes off*) throughout waking hours on the day of surgery. Swelling reaches its peak 2-3 days after surgery.
- Rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day. Resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. Be careful going from a resting position to standing – you could get light-headed.
- Do not dislodge the blood clot that has formed in the tooth socket – it's necessary for healing.
- Avoid drinking through a straw. Do not rinse your mouth or spit. Swishing, sucking through a straw can dislodge the clot. Keep anything sharp from entering the wound (*crunchy food, toothpicks, eating utensils*).
- Do not smoke. Smokers heal more slowly and are at increased risk of developing a painful dry socket.
- Avoid brushing your teeth near the extraction site for the first 72 hours.

Pain:

- Pain following tooth extraction is not uncommon. Take 400-600 mg Ibuprofen (*Motrin® or Advil®*) every 6-8 hours (*not to exceed 3200mg/day*), beginning an hour or so before the procedure (*with a small sip of water*), or afterwards, while you are still numb, (*so long as you can take ibuprofen*) to help control post-operative pain. If you can't take ibuprofen, then take 1-2 tablets of regular Tylenol® every 4 hours (*not to exceed 3000mg/day*). Prescription narcotic pain medication is optional and should be taken as instructed. Prevent nausea & vomiting by sipping on ginger ale & 7 Up®; don't take medications on an empty stomach. **Avoid driving, operating heavy machinery or drinking alcohol when taking prescription pain medications.**
- If you were prescribed antibiotics, take them for the specified time period, even if you no longer have symptoms. Some antibiotics reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills; use alternative birth control methods for 2 months.
- If you break out in a rash or hives, stop taking any prescribed medications and contact our office. For medical emergencies, call 911 immediately.

Diet:

- Do not eat anything until the bleeding has stopped. Pudding, Jell-O®, yogurt & applesauce are good food choices while you are still numb. Afterwards, select soft foods like pasta, eggs, mashed potatoes, & pancakes.
- Resume your usual diet as soon as you are able, after the first 2 days. Avoid nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, & chips until the socket has healed.

DAY AFTER SURGERY UNTIL COMPLETE HEALING:

- Rinse your mouth three times a day with warm water and salt (*1/2 tsp of salt in 1 cup of water*).
- Brush and floss every day to remove plaque – but avoid touching the extraction site for the first 72 hours.
- If you feel sharp edges in the surgical areas with your tongue, these are not parts of teeth – but the bony walls of the tooth socket. These slivers of bone may work their way out in 1-2 weeks. If they are bothersome, we will remove them.
- Bruising may appear on the skin. It should disappear after 5-7 days.
- You may have difficulty opening your mouth for several days.
- Sutures/stitches will resorb or fall out on their own, unless the doctor has scheduled you for a suture-removal appointment.

CALL OUR OFFICE at ___719-654-0105___ if you experience *severe pain that appears to be increasing in severity, excessive or severe bleeding, marked fever, excessive warm swelling, or reactions to medications.*