

Postoperative Instructions for Extractions

A. Wound Care

1. Bite firmly on the gauze pack that has been placed until you arrive home, and then remove gently.
2. Do not smoke for 24 hours because this will promote bleeding and interfere with healing.

B. Bleeding

1. Do not be alarmed if some blood oozes from the area of surgery. This is normal!
2. Do not spit or suck through a straw, as this promotes bleeding.
3. If bleeding begins again, place a gauze pack directly over the tooth socket and bite firmly for 30 minutes.

C. Discomfort

1. Some discomfort is normal after surgery.
2. Unless the doctor prescribed any pain medication, take 800mg of ibuprofen every 4 hours as needed for pain. If medication was prescribed, follow the instructions on the bottle.
3. Do not drive or drink alcohol if you take prescription pain medication.

D. Diet

1. It is important to drink plenty of fluids.
2. Eat soft foods for the first day after surgery and eat solid food once it is comfortable.

E. Oral Hygiene

1. Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth for the first 8 hours after surgery.
2. Rinse gently with warm salt water (1/2 tsp of salt in 8oz of warm water) a few times a day.
3. Brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery.

F. Rest

1. Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours after your surgery.

G. Swelling

1. Swelling after surgery is a normal body reaction. It reaches its maximum about 48 hours after surgery and usually lasts 4 to 6 days.
2. Applying ice packs over the area of surgery for the first 12 hours helps control swelling and may help the area feel more comfortable.

H. Bruising

1. You may experience some mild bruising in the area of your surgery. This is a normal response in some persons and should not be a cause for alarm. It will disappear in 7 to 14 days.

I. Stiffness

1. After surgery you may experience jaw muscle stiffness and limited opening of your mouth. This is normal and will improve in 5 to 10 days.

J. Stitches

1. If stitches have been placed in the area of your surgery, they will dissolve typically in 7-10 days.

PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- excessive discomfort that cannot be controlled with pain medication
- bleeding that cannot be controlled by biting on gauze
- increased swelling after the third day following your surgery
- high fever