



Extraction Post-Op Instructions

Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully.

Bleeding:

- A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Some bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon the first day or two.
- If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened, squeeze-dried black tea bag for sixty minutes, repeating as necessary.
- Avoid strenuous exercise. If bleeding does not subside, call for further instructions.

Pain and Swelling:

- Pain and swelling may not become apparent until the day following surgery and may not reach its maximum until 2-3 days post-operatively.
- If stronger pain medication has been prescribed, take as directed. This medicine may make you groggy and slow down your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages.
- Swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs to the sides of the face where surgery was performed, used 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off while you are awake. After 24 hours, ice has no beneficial effect.
- Stiffness (also known as *trismus*) of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening your mouth for a few days following surgery. This can be a normal post-operative event which will resolve in time.

Diet:

- You may eat anything soft by chewing away from the surgical site, but stay away from very spicy food or extreme hot or cold foods and beverages.
- **Do not smoke or use straws**, as the sucking motion can cause more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot. A dry socket may occur when the blood clot dissolves prematurely from the tooth socket.
- Drink water normally, about 6 glasses per day.

Cleaning the Mouth:

- **No rinsing or spitting of any kind** should be performed until the **day following surgery**. You can brush your teeth gently the night of surgery, but do not rinse.
- After 24 hours you should begin rinsing with warm salt water (a cup of warm water mixed with a teaspoon of salt) at least 5-6 times a day, especially after eating.