

Extractions

Patient Instructions:

Follow these instructions carefully to ensure successful healing of your tooth extraction.

Before Procedure:

- **Schedule time off** so you can take it easy for several days after your tooth extraction.
- **If you are a woman taking birth control pills**, please be aware that medication prescribed may affect the effectiveness of your medication.
- **Arrange to have a friend or family member** drive you home if given pain or anxiety medication prior to appointment.

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 medication

During the first 24 hours:

It is important for a blood clot to form on the extraction site to stop bleeding, reduce pain, and speed healing. To protect the clot and avoid the pain of dry socket:

- Bite on gauze pad firmly for 45-60 minutes. If bleeding or oozing continues, bite down on clean pad or moist tea bag for 45-60 minutes.
- Do not spit, and do not suck on candies or through a straw.
- Do not rinse your mouth, and do not brush or floss next to the site.
- Do not smoke or use tobacco. Avoid tobacco for a minimum of 72 hours because it slows healing.
- Do not sneeze or cough forcefully.
- Limit yourself to calm activities and elevate your head with pillows when you lie down to reduce bleeding.
- Do not drink hot, carbonated or alcoholic drinks and avoid hot or spicy foods.

To control discomfort, take pain medication before the anesthetic has worn off.

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.

After the first 24 hours:

- **Begin to eat normally** as soon as it is comfortable
- **Resume brushing and flossing**, but clean gently around the site for about a week
- **If antibiotics were prescribed**, continue taking them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.
- **Reduce soreness or swelling** by applying moist heat. 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 2-3 times a day for the week following the extraction.