

EXTRACTION POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

Remember that you have just had your tooth/teeth extracted which is minor surgery!

Take care of yourself!

The initial healing period typically takes from 1-2 weeks; gum tissue takes about 3-4 weeks to heal and complete healing of the one can take about 6-8 months depending on your care of this area.

Some discomfort, bleeding and swelling should be expected in the next 24 hours as your mouth heals. Following these simple instructions will normally be all that is needed.

To promote faster healing:

1. *DO NOT DISTURB THE WOUND* – In doing so, you may invite irritation, infection and or bleeding. The healing process begins immediately after surgery as your body sends blood to nourish the tooth socket. Simple pressure from a piece of gauze is usually all that is needed to control the bleeding and to help a blood clot to form in the socket.
2. *DO NOT SMOKE OR USE TOBACCO PRODUCTS FOR AT LEAST 4 DAYS AFTER THE SURGERY* – Smoke can interfere with the healing process, promote bleeding and is the leading cause of a very painful situation known as a DRY SOCKET. Smoking will slow healing and soft tissue will not be able to begin to fill in the socket to form the blood clot needed for healthy healing.
3. *DO NOT SPIT OR SUCK THROUGH A STRAW* – This will promote bleeding and may dislodge the blood clot.
4. *BRUSHING* – It is very important to keep the area as clean as possible to prevent infection and promote healing. DO NOT directly brush the extraction site for the first 3-4 days after surgery to prevent dislodging of the blood clot from the socket. DO NOT use any toothpaste for the first 2-3 days post extraction. Rinsing toothpaste from your mouth could remove the blood clot. Instead, brush gently with warm water.
5. *MOUTHWASH* – Avoid all rinsing for 24 hours after extraction to avoid dislodging the clot. After the first 24 hours, you should VERY GENTLY RINSE this area 4 times a day using warm salt water (1 tablespoon of salt in 8oz of warm water) or mild antiseptic rinse like Chlorhexadine. Chlorhexadine should be used no longer than 10 days.
6. *DIET* – For the first 24-48 hours, you should maintain a soft food diet such as Jell-O, mashed potatoes, pudding, etc. Avoid foods that crumble and can be sharp such as

crackers and chips. These can cause irritation to not attempt to eat until the numbness has worn off to avoid trauma to your lips, cheeks and tongue. Once the numbness has worn off, eat on the opposite side of your mouth to keep food away from the extraction site. It is of utmost importance to maintain a healthy diet post surgery to promote healing.

7. *ACTIVITY* – For the first 24 hours, your activity should be limited because increased activity can lead to increased bleeding. No bending over or heavy lifting for 2-3 days. When lying down, elevate your head slightly. Take care of yourself and get plenty of rest.
8. *DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL* for 48 hours after surgery.
9. *MEDICATIONS* – Some discomfort is normal after surgery. Analgesic tablets i.e. Tylenol or Motrin (Ibuprofen) or non-aspirin can be taken every 4-6 hours as needed or as directed by Dr. Eilers. Prescription medication, which may have been prescribed for you, should be taken as directed from Dr. Eilers. If antibiotics are prescribed, you should carefully follow the instructions and finish the antibiotics until they are completely gone. Avoid aspirin as it may increase bleeding.

Things to expect:

1. *BLEEDING* – When you leave the office, you will be given verbal instructions regarding the control of postoperative bleeding. A gauze pad will be placed on the extraction site that you are asked to keep firm pressure on. You will also be asked to change this dressing every 30 to 40 minutes or so depending on the amount of bleeding that is occurring. Do not chew or suck on the pack. IT IS NORMAL for some blood to ooze from the area of surgery for 12-24 hours. We will give you a package of gauze to take with you to use at home if the bleeding should continue. Should you need the gauze at home, remember to fold the clean gauze into a pad, thick enough to bite firmly in place. Bite down or use finger pressure for 30-60 minutes. This pressure helps reduce bleeding and permits a clot to form in the tooth socket. If bleeding persists, moisten a tea bag with water and fold it in half and bite down on it for 30 minutes. Tea contains Tannic Acid, which may help to reduce the bleeding. Keep your head elevated with pillows to control bleeding.
2. *SWELLING* – To prevent swelling, apply an ice pack or cold towel to the outside of your face in the area of the extraction during the first 12-24 hours. Apply alternately, 10-20 minutes on and 10-20 minutes off for no longer than a 6 hour period. Avoid direct contact of ice to your skin as it may cause an irritation or burn. Warm salt water rinses after 24 hours will also reduce swelling.
3. *PAIN* – Pain that lasts from 7-10 days but is gradually improving should be considered normal. Pain that seems to be getting worse after the first 2 days should be considered abnormal and may require an evaluation by Dr. Eilers.

4. *SORE JAW JOINT* – Your jaw may be sore from holding your mouth open during surgery. This may last up to 7 days. Massage the jaw muscles gently. Eat soft foods and do not over extend opening your mouth, it can further aggravate this area.
5. *ANESTHESIA WARNING* – When a local anesthetic is used, your lip, tongue and cheek will be numb for several hours after the procedure. While it is numb, you must be careful not to bite, chew, pinch and/or scratch this area which can lead to serious soft tissue trauma.
6. *LONG TERM PROBLEMS* – You may have a numb, tingling feeling in the area for 4-6 weeks or longer. Permanent numbness, although rare, is a potential side effect of surgery. Having a missing tooth can lead to several problems such as drifting teeth, difficulty chewing, and malocclusion which could lead to TMJ problems. This area may need to be restored with a fixed bridge, implant, a removable partial or a completed denture to insure good long-term dental health.

REPORT ANY UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES IMMEDIATELY!!!

If you have any questions regarding these directions or need any future clarification or if you experience excessive bleeding or swelling, persistent and severe jaw pain, fever, or any reaction to medications you should call Dr. Eilers immediately at (503) 970-8392. If you are experiencing a medical emergency call 911.