

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR DENTAL EXTRACTIONS/IMPLANTS/BONE GRAFTS

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

When to call us

It is normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a tooth extraction, but call us immediately if you have:

- Heavy or increasing bleeding
- Pain or swelling that increases or continues beyond two or three days
- A bad taste or odor in your mouth
- A negative reaction to any prescribed medication

During the first 24 hours

It is critically important that a blood clot forms in the extraction site to stop bleeding, reduce pain, and speed healing. To protect the clot and avoid the pain of a dry socket:

- Bite on a gauze pad firmly for 30-60 minutes. Blood and saliva mix in the mouth and make it look like there is more bleeding than there actually is. Some oozing is normal: however, after 1 hour, repeat with a clean gauze pad if oozing is profuse. The site could ooze for as long as 24 hours.
- **Do NOT spit and do NOT use a straw!!!** This could dislodge the blood clot.
- Don't smoke or use tobacco. Avoid tobacco for at least 72 hours after surgery.
- Don't sneeze or cough. Use sinus or cold medication (if you are able).
- Limit yourself to calm activities and elevate your head with pillows when you lie down to reduce bleeding.
- Don't drink hot, carbonated, or alcoholic drinks, and be sure to avoid hot or spicy foods.

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

To keep swelling to a minimum, use an ice pack over the area, 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off.

When the numbness has worn off completely, drink lots of fluids and eat only soft nutritious foods, chewing away from the area of the socket.

After the first 24 hours

Begin to eat normally as soon as it's comfortable.

Resume brushing and flossing, but clean gently around the site for about a week.

If antibiotics were prescribed, continue to take 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 subsides 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 two to three times a day for the week after extraction.

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