

Post-Op Instructions after Tooth Extraction

- After tooth extraction, it is important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. Although we may have placed a dissolvable material in the extraction area to assist with clotting, it is recommended that you firmly bite on the gauze pad for 30 to 45 minutes following the procedure.
- We will also give you a package of gauze to take with you to use at home if the bleeding should continue. Should you need to use the gauze at home, remember to roll it into a ball large enough to cover the wound and **moisten with water**. Gently place gauze over the extraction site and hold firmly in place, by biting or with finger pressure, for about 20-30 minutes.
- After the blood clot forms, it is important not to disturb or dislodge the clot, especially for the first 24 hours. **Do not smoke, suck through a straw, rinse vigorously, or brush near the extraction site for one to two days.**
- Reduce exercise for the first 24 hours. This will keep blood pressure lower, which will reduce bleeding from the extraction site.
- To reduce swelling, place an ice pack or zip top baggie with ice and water against the cheek adjacent to the affected area. Apply alternately, 20 minutes on then 20 minutes off, this is most effective if performed during the first 12 hours post extraction. The swelling should subside after 48-72 hours.
- In some cases, prescription pain medications may be prescribed. Please take only as directed, and do not drive or operate machinery if taking narcotic medications. **If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if signs and symptoms of infection are gone.**
- **After** 24 hours, you may gently rinse your mouth with salt water three times a day (one teaspoon of salt in one cup of warm water, rinse-swish-spit). Rinsing after meals will help in preventing food from accumulating in the extraction site.
- Drink lots of fluids, and eat soft food on the opposite side from the extraction site. Avoid alcoholic beverages and hot or spicy foods. You may resume normal eating as soon as you are comfortable.
- Sutures (stitches) may have been placed to help control bleeding and promote healing. These sutures :
 - will dissolve and do not need to be removed OR
 - will be removed at your follow-up visit.

If the stitches come out during the first 48 hours, please call our office.

- Contact the office immediately if you have heavy uncontrolled bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling after two to three days, or a reaction to the medications prescribed. The office number is 410-798-6341.