



Michael A. Lovato DDS
General & Cosmetic Dentistry

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXTRACTIONS

- Your lips and tongue may be numb for several hours after the appointment. Avoid any chewing and drinking, including hot beverages, until the effects of the anesthesia has completely subsided. It is easy to bite or burn your tongue, lip or cheek while you are numb. Children should be observed until the anesthesia has worn off.
- It's important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. Do not disturb the surgical site. Keep firm pressure against the site until bleeding and oozing has stopped for 30-45 minutes. You may need to change and use the additional gauze and repeat this step if oozing continues or reoccurs later.
- Be very gentle – do not: rinse vigorously, drink with a straw, use mouthwash, stretch the lips or cheeks to look at the area, or probe the area with fingers or other objects.
- To alleviate any swelling that may occur, ice packs may be used for the first 24 hours (10 minutes on then 10 minutes off) to decrease swelling and/or bruising. If swelling persists after 24 hours, warm/moist compresses (10 minutes on then 10 minutes off) may help. If swelling occurs after 48 hours, call our office.
- Avoid physical exercise and exertion for the first 24 hours. This keeps your blood pressure lower, reduces bleeding, and helps the healing process. Return to normal activities as tolerated.
- Do not use tobacco products for 48-72 hours after tooth extractions. Smoke can interfere with the healing process and promote bleeding. Continuing to smoke during these first few days 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. Do not play any wind instruments or blow up balloons for a period of 10-14 days.
- You will be most comfortable with soft foods today. Chew on the side away from the extraction and drink clear liquids. Do not eat hot and spicy foods, nuts, sun- flower seeds, popcorn, peanuts or other hard foods that may get lodged in the surgical areas or use alcoholic beverages for a week.
- Take pain medication as recommended. Don't take medication on an empty stomach or nausea may result. Do not mix pain medications with alcohol. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.
- Tomorrow, resume your normal oral hygiene, cleaning all areas well. This will speed healing. Do not directly brush the extraction site for the first three to four days. After the first 24 hours, gently rinse your mouth with warm salt water three times a day (1/4tsp. salt in 8oz of warm water). Rinse very gently after every meal and snack, making sure that the water reaches the extraction site. Rinsing removes food particles and debris from the socket to help promote healing.
- Extraction sites usually heal with few complications. Premature dissolving or loss of a blood clot following removal of a permanent tooth may result in a "dry socket". This typically occurs on the third to fifth day after the extraction, with a persistent throbbing pain in the jaw. Call our office if this occurs.

Call our dental office if you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, a bad taste in your mouth, continued swelling after two or three days, or a reaction to the medication. After a few days, you'll be feeling fine and can resume your normal activities.

Superior care, one patient at a time.

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