

## POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS FOR DENTAL EXTRACTIONS

Following the surgery, get adequate rest and avoid strenuous activity for a few days. Swelling, discomfort, and restricted jaw function are expected, and so are not causes for alarm. To achieve a successful and comfortable recovery, please carefully read and follow these instructions.

1. **BLEEDING**            Keep pressure over the extraction area with gauze. Mild bleeding is normal for the first few days, but if excessive bleeding occurs, place a roll of gauze over the area and bite firmly for 30 minutes. Repeat if necessary. Avoid rinsing, spitting, smoking, and drinking through a straw as these all can disturb the blood clot and reinitiate bleeding. At night, use an extra pillow and keep your head elevated. Do not keep the gauze in your mouth while sleeping. If significant bleeding continues, call our office.
  
2. **SWELLING**            Swelling and bruising are normal reactions following surgery. Applying ice to the outside of the face over the area of surgery during the first 24 hours helps reduce swelling. Alternate applying the ice pack for 20 minutes, then removing for 20 minutes during this first day. Do not use ice after the second day. Swelling usually reaches its maximum about 48-72 hours after surgery. Swelling may cause difficulty opening your mouth, but this should resolve on its own with time. Starting 72 hours after surgery, applying moist heat to the surgical areas 4-6 times/day will increase local blood circulation and help reduce swelling. Do not apply heat until 3 days after surgery, unless we tell you otherwise. Bruising will resolve on its own, but may take up to a week or more.
  
3. **INFECTION**            Healthy patients have a low risk of developing an infection following most oral surgeries. If necessary, you may be placed on antibiotic medication, which you must take until it is completely gone. If you develop hives or a rash, stop taking the medication and contact our office immediately. For 24-48 hours after surgery, you may have a slight elevation in temperature. This is a normal response to surgery, but if this persists or if your temperature greatly rises, please notify us. A post-operative infection usually takes about 3 days to develop.
  
4. **PAIN**                    Swelling and some discomfort usually reach their peak 48-72 hours after surgery, then start to decrease. If you have only minor pain, try an over-the-counter drug such as Tylenol, Advil, or Aleve. Avoid aspirin products, as they interfere with blood clotting. If we prescribed a stronger pain medication for you, take it as directed. Since the medication may make you drowsy, do not drive a car or carry out any important tasks while taking the medication. Do not take the pain medication on an empty stomach. If you develop hives or a rash, stop taking the medication and contact our office immediately.
  
5. **NAUSEA**                Post-op nausea may be caused by swallowing a small amount of blood during and/or after surgery. Pain medications can also cause nausea. If your nausea persists, contact our office.

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6. **DIET** We recommend a bland liquid diet for the day of surgery. After this, soft food high in vitamins and protein is recommended. Avoid crunchy, hard, or spicy foods, as they may irritate the surgical area. Resume your normal diet as soon as possible
7. **ORAL HYGIENE** Do not rinse your mouth after surgery during the first day, as this may loosen the blood clot and reinitiate bleeding. The day after surgery, rinse gently with warm salt water 5-6 times a day (after meals and at bedtime). You may brush your teeth starting the day after surgery, but avoid the extraction area.
8. **SMOKING** Absolutely prohibited as it greatly irritates the surgical area, delaying healing and increasing the risk of infection.
9. **SUTURES** If sutures were used to close the extraction wound, they will be removed during your follow-up visit.
10. **HOLE** You may feel a hole where your tooth was removed. This will be filled in with normal tissue over the next few months
11. **DRY LIPS** If your lips are dry or cracked following surgery, keep them moist with Vaseline or other lip ointments.
12. **BIRTH CONTROL** Antibiotics inactivate most birth control pills. If prescribed antibiotics, women who take birth control pills should use another method of contraception for the remainder of the menstrual cycle.
13. **PROBLEMS** If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call our office or call Dr. Cho at (909) 518-9047.