



Post-Operative Instructions Following Extractions

Bleeding

Some bleeding is normal during the first 24 hours, although redness in the saliva may appear for 1-2 days. Change the gauze every hour until the bleeding stops. Do not sleep or eat with gauze in your mouth. Excessive bleeding can be controlled by biting on a wet tea bag (regular black tea). If bleeding remains heavy or uncontrolled, please contact our office.

Swelling

Swelling is a normal occurrence after surgery. To minimize swelling, apply an ice pack to the outside of face for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off during the first 24 hours. Swelling usually peaks within 48–72 hours and then gradually improves.

Diet

You may eat and drink as soon as you leave our office. Starting with softer foods may feel more comfortable. It is important to eat and drink as usual to support recovery.

Your mouth will be numb for approximately 2-6 hours so avoid hot temperatures and be careful not to chew on your cheeks during this time.

Pain

You should begin taking pain medication before you feel the local anesthetic wearing off. It is much more effective to “stay out of pain” than “get out of pain.” Start with an Ibuprofen (600-800mg). If you are still experiencing slight soreness, start taking Tylenol (650mg) as well (the 2 medications may be taken together). If the pain becomes severe and does not subside with Ibuprofen or Tylenol, you may start taking the stronger pain medication that you were prescribed (Hydrocodone with acetaminophen, Oxycodone with acetaminophen, Tylenol #3, or Tramadol). Do not take Tylenol (acetaminophen) with any stronger pain medication prescribed (except Tramadol), as they all already contain acetaminophen, and you do not want to exceed 4000mg per 24 hours.

Limited opening

Stiffness of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty opening your mouth for a few days following surgery. This is normal and will resolve in time. Stretching the jaw during the day can help relieve the tightness.

Antibiotics and Medications

If antibiotics or other medications are prescribed, be sure to take as directed.

Oral Hygiene

Brush your teeth as usual but avoid brushing directly on the extraction site. If sutures are placed, you will be informed at the time of your procedure. After upper tooth extractions, begin gentle saltwater rinses after meals and before bedtime. For lower tooth extractions, you will be provided with a syringe to rinse the extraction site. Place the syringe tip inside the socket to flush out any debris; you may need to repeat this a few times. Some bleeding or discomfort is normal. Begin rinsing the night of your surgery and continue until the sites no longer trap food. The socket can take 1-2 months to fully close.

Activity

We recommend that you refrain from physical activities (e.g. working out, running, playing sports) for 2 days after your surgery. Increased activity may lead to increased swelling, pain, and bleeding.

Wearing Your Prosthesis

All retainers, dentures, or nightguards may be worn as usual, unless otherwise specified by the doctor.