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## Post-Op Instructions: *Tooth Extractions*

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You have had an extraction completed in our office. Follow these instructions carefully to ensure proper, more comfortable healing of the site. If you have questions about this material, please contact us.

***During the first 24 Hours*** it is important to let a blood clot form at the extraction site so that bleeding will stop. This will also reduce the risk of pain and allow for healing to continue. To protect the forming clot and thereby avoid the pain of dry socket we ask that you:

- Firmly and consistently bite on gauze for at least 30 minutes. This will act as your bandage. Extra gauze was provided for you to replace the original pack after 30-45 minutes if needed. Change gauze every 30-45 minutes until active oozing stops. Often, blood will mix with saliva, making the bleeding look worse than it actually is. Do not be afraid to swallow your own saliva.
- If you are still bleeding after your 3<sup>rd</sup> packing, bite on a wet tea bag for 30 minutes.
- Do not spit or suck on a straw. This pressure may cause the clot to dislodge.
- Do not rinse your mouth or brush/floss the site
- Do not smoke or use other tobacco products for at least 72 hours. Suction from smoking may cause the clot to dislodge and tobacco use will slow healing.
- Try to avoid sneezing or coughing. Sinus or allergy medication may be necessary if you are not feeling well.
- Limit strenuous activities. Do not exercise and try to avoid lifting heavy objects or taking part in activities that may increase your heart rate.
- Elevate your head when you lie down. You may want to use an old pillowcase and/or cover your pillow with a towel overnight. Even a trace of blood can ruin your pillow.
- Avoid hot or spicy foods and hot or carbonated beverages. Eat soft foods (pasta, mashed potatoes, yogurt, eggs, etc.) and avoid chewing in the area of the extraction site. Drink plenty of fluids.
- Ice packs can be used to help control swelling. 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.

***After 24 hours*** you may begin the following activities:

- Normal home care (brushing, flossing and rinsing gently for about 1 week).
- Begin to eat normally as you become more comfortable
- If antibiotics were prescribed, continue to take them until the prescription is finished, even if your symptoms have subsided.
- Rinse very gently with warm salt water (we recommend 1/2 glass of water with 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Do this several times daily for the week following your extraction. This will speed up the healing process.

***Pain Control*** after the procedure is often necessary. In most cases we recommend 600mg of ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) as soon as possible and then every 6 hours as needed. Do not exceed 2400mg in 24 hours. If you cannot take NSAIDs, 650mg of acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be taken every 4-6 hours. Do not exceed 3000mg in 24 hours. Your provider may have prescribed a drug. If so, follow the prescription.

***When to call us:*** Discomfort and swelling are normal for the first several days. You should call us immediately if:

- You experience heavy or increased bleeding after the first hour
- Pain or swelling worsens or strongly persists after the first 48-72 hours
- You note a poor taste or odor
- You have a reaction of any kind to medications we have instructed you to take