

Extraction Post Operative Instructions

After your tooth or teeth have been extracted, how quickly you heal depends on how difficult the extraction was (a fully erupted tooth versus an impacted tooth). Generally, here is what to expect:

The First 24 Hours:

Bleeding: This may occur for several hours after your teeth are removed. To control it, place a piece of clean moist gauze or moistened tea bag over the empty tooth socket and bite down firmly. This needs to be done for about 45 minutes. The tannic acid in tea helps blood clots (similar to a scab on an open wound) to form.

You should avoid rinsing, spitting or sucking actions for 24 hours after your teeth are removed. For example, don't drink beverages through straws or smoke, and avoid hot liquids (such as soup or tea). These activities can cause the clot to dislodge, which will cause dry socket.

Facial Swelling: This can occur where the tooth was extracted. You can apply a cold compress to ease the swelling and pain. Place the compress or ice (in a wrapped cloth) on the area of your face that is swollen for 10-minutes on, followed by 20-minutes off. Repeat as necessary during this first 24-hour period.

Pain Medications: Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) can be taken to manage your pain. We may prescribe more potent pain relievers, such as narcotics, if necessary.

Antibiotics: May be prescribed prior to removing your teeth (to treat any infection around the tooth) should continue to be taken until you are finished the full prescription.

Food: Avoid hot liquids and alcoholic beverages for at least 24 hours. When the extraction is more difficult, you will need to consume a soft or liquid diet for at least 24 hours after we have removed your teeth. Following your procedure you should drink a minimum of six glasses of liquid during the first 24-hour period to replenish blood loss.

Brush your Teeth: You need to continue to brush your teeth, but avoid the teeth adjacent to the extracted tooth during the first 24 hours. On day two, you can resume the gentle brushing of your teeth. However, do not use commercial mouth rinses because these can irritate the area of extraction.

After 24 Hours:

Facial Swelling: Facial Swelling in the area of your tooth extraction needs to be managed with heat after the first 24 hours of ice. Use a moist warm towel and apply it to the area on a 20-minute on, 20-minute off- schedule. Repeat as necessary.

Rinse Your Mouth with Warm Salt Water: Use 1/2 teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water before bed and after meals. Do not use commercial mouth rinses.

Complete Healing: Will not occur for a few weeks to a few months following the removal of your teeth. Usually within the first week or two, you will feel reasonably comfortable.

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