



TOOTH EXTRACTION POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Emergency Number: 540-632-0338

-Keep pressure on the extraction site with gauze for half an hour (30 minutes). At this time you can replace the gauze with a new one if still bleeding. Continue replacing gauze every 30 minutes until bleeding has subsided; biting down on a tea bag may help stop the bleeding if you are still bleeding one hour after surgery.

-Take any prescribed medications as directed. For antibiotics, take until all the medication is gone. Pain prescriptions only need to be taken as long as needed.

-Remember to avoid the “Three S’s”: **No SPITTING! No SMOKING! No drinking through a STRAW!** Any suction you place on your mouth will want to dislodge the blood clot and could lead to a dry socket.

-Wait to eat until the numbness has worn off. This is to prevent you from burning or biting your lip, cheek, or tongue. Eat a soft diet for the first 24 hours (soups, eggs, pancakes, mashed potatoes etc.) **Avoid** hard or crunchy foods (peanuts, popcorn, chips, etc.) for 1 week.

-The next day after the procedure (24-36 hours), you may rinse your mouth with a salt water rinse (1/4 teaspoon salt in a glass of warm water). Remember, no swishing as this will tend to dislodge the clot; instead, fill your mouth with the salt water and gently rock your head around before drooling the rinse out. Don’t spit!!

-Avoid brushing around the socket for at least 24 hours. When you do brush near there, be very gentle!

-Ice packs may be used to minimize swelling for the first 24 hours. Rotate 15 minutes of ice pack time with 15 minutes of non-icing.

-If you had sutures placed, it is normal for the sutures to fall out or dissolve within the first few days (24-72 hours). The area will still heal normally.

Common Complications

- 1) **PAIN:** the most common post operative problem. Many different causes and symptoms of many different problems! If the medication does not relieve pain or the pain persists (and is not improving), please call the office.
- 2) **SWELLING:** swelling is common after surgical procedures. It is usually more pronounced when a complicated procedure has been performed. As healing progresses, swelling will decrease. If swelling becomes severe or makes swallowing difficult, please contact the office.
- 3) **DISCOLORATION OF THE FACE:** bruising or discoloration is caused by bleeding beneath the surface of the skin. It usually corrects itself within a week or two after surgery.
- 4) **NUMBNESS (PARESTHESIA, ANESTHESIA):** dental surgery is performed in close proximity to a number of nerves in the face. Post operative swelling or surgery can cause numbness, especially of the lip and chin. This condition is usually temporary and will disappear when swelling recedes. It is **IMPORTANT** that you alert the office of any numbness still present 24 hours after a surgical procedure!!
- 5) **FEVER:** a slight fever for 24-48 hours after surgery is not uncommon. If it persists or is over 101 degrees, please contact the office.
- 6) **BONE PIECES:** Small sharp pieces of bone often form in the surgical areas after a week or more. These fragments usually work out by themselves. If not, you may need to see the doctor for treatment.
- 7) **STIFFNESS:** Difficulty opening and closing the jaw after intra-oral surgery is a common occurrence. It is usually a result of the swelling discussed above. Ibuprofen is recommended for this type of jaw pain; chewing gum may help loosen up the muscles as well.