

Postoperative Instructions: Extractions

Pain

- If you are medically able, take ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) and acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Start with 600mg ibuprofen and alternate with 500mg acetaminophen every three hours so that each medication is taken on its own 6-hour schedule.
- If you are given stronger pain medication, please take it as directed in addition to the ibuprofen and acetaminophen.
- Writing down the medication taken, dose, and time assists in limiting confusion.
- Start taking the first Ibuprofen dose as soon as possible after the procedure.

Bleeding

- Do not swish, spit, or use straws for 24 hours following your procedure.
- Bite down with firm pressure on the gauze that is placed over the surgical site. Change every 45 minutes as needed. As the gauze turns pink, it can be removed. Call our office if bleeding does not stop/is filling your mouth rapidly with blood after several gauze changes.
- Remove gauze when eating/drinking and replace as needed if bleeding still occurs at the extraction site.
- Do not sleep with gauze in your mouth.

Syringe

- If you were given a syringe, start use 5 days after your procedure. Draw up room temperature water or saltwater in the syringe and gently direct the tip of the syringe to the surgical site.
- Flush sites daily for 1 week or until you no longer irrigate out debris from the sites.

Swelling and Bruising

- Swelling can be expected to increase during the first 48 hours after the procedure and peaks in 48–72 hours with a gradual reduction over a week.
- Apply ice to the surgical site for the first 48 hours if needed, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. Be sure to place a towel or barrier between the skin and the ice pack so the skin is not burned.
- Elevating the head with pillows when sleeping is helpful during the first 2–3 days

Diet

- Start drinking liquids after the procedure. Cold, cool liquids are best and avoid anything hot. A soft, non-chew diet can be advanced to a regular diet as tolerated.
- Stay away from hard, crunchy, spicy, and sharp foods for two weeks.
- Avoid carbonated beverages for one week following the procedure.

Stitches

- Stitches will dissolve on their own unless otherwise stated.

Oral Hygiene

- Resume normal brushing and oral hygiene the day after surgery. Keep the bristles on the teeth and be gentle around the surgical site.
- Begin gentle rinsing 24 hours after the procedure after meals with regular tap water or salt water. If you were given a medicated mouth rinse, use this morning and evening for one week starting 24 hours after the procedure.
- Avoid smoking as it limits and delays healing.

Antibiotics

- If you were given an antibiotic, take it as prescribed until completed.

Activity

- Limit strenuous activity following the procedure and gradually increase as you feel more comfortable.