
POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: DENTAL EXTRACTIONS

- Immediately following surgery, maintain pressure on the surgical area by biting down on the provided gauze pad or roll until the bleeding stops. A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following a surgical procedure. Placing the gauze pad over the area and biting firmly will help prevent excessive bleeding. Replace the gauze as necessary until the bleeding stops.
- Children should be supervised after having an extraction to make sure they do not bite or chew their tongue or lips, as this can cause serious injury to the soft tissue.
- Please fill any prescriptions you have been given and take as directed. If you have been prescribed pain medication other than aspirin, Tylenol® or ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®), do not drive, operate heavy equipment, work around machinery or tools, or engage in any other activity that may be unsafe when groggy, as your reflexes and judgment will be affected by the medication. Antibiotics may be prescribed to help prevent infection. If you have been placed on antibiotics, take the medicine as directed.
- Swelling around the face, eyes, and surgical site is not uncommon, although it may not appear until the day following the surgery and may become more noticeable 2–3 days following surgery. Applying a cold compress to the face near the extraction site will help minimize swelling. If using an ice pack, please do not apply ice directly to your skin but place a cloth between the ice and your skin at all times. You may apply the cold compress for up to 20 minutes on and at least 20 minutes off as needed. After 36 hours, the cold compress will have no further impact on swelling.
- For 24 hours following your surgery, do not suck on a straw, spit, or smoke. Avoid hot and spicy foods as well as carbonated and alcoholic beverages.
- Restrict your activities on the day of your surgery. Avoid excessive work or play, and resume normal activity the following day as tolerated.
- After the first day, gently rinse with a warm saltwater rinse, approximately one-half teaspoon of salt in an 8-ounce glass of water, 3 times a day.
- During the first few days after surgery, restrict your diet to liquids and soft foods such as soups, yogurt, juice, and smoothies.
- Sutures may have been placed. Most sutures placed by our office will dissolve on their own in 7–10 days, and it may not be necessary to return to the office for sutures to be removed. If you have sutures that do need a follow-up visit for removal, we will let you know at the time they are placed.

Please call one of our offices if you experience severe pain or excessive bleeding or swelling, or if you have any questions or concerns. In the event of an emergency, please call one of our offices. If you are experiencing a serious or life-threatening emergency, please call 911 or visit the nearest emergency room.