



CARE INSTRUCTIONS: EXTRACTIONS

Post-operative care is important following oral surgery, and recovery may be delayed if this care is neglected. Some swelling, stiffness, oozing of blood and discomfort are expected after surgery. It is helpful to have the patient observed by a responsible adult for the duration of the day of the surgery. The following includes our post-operative instructions and events which may take place following this kind of surgery.

Bleeding: The gauze pad that was placed after surgery acts as a protective dressing and should be left in place for 2–3 hours with gentle pressure applied. Some oozing is to be expected. If excessive bleeding is noticed, this is not normal. Most often, this can be controlled by the use of clean gauze placed directly over the surgical site and held with firm pressure for approximately 1 hour until bleeding is controlled. If bleeding continues, call the office.

Pain: Pain may be expected after the procedure and will reach its maximum during the first few hours. Alternating over-the-counter ibuprofen and Tylenol® every 4–6 hours will give the best pain relief.

Swelling: Swelling and stiffness are to be expected. This swelling may increase over the first 2 days, and then it should start to lessen. Apply ice to the cheek on the side the tooth was removed for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.

Nourishment: Please continue to eat and drink throughout the healing period. On the day of the tooth removal, a light diet is recommended (Carnation Breakfast Essentials®, JELL-O®, soups, shakes, etc.). The day after, a soft to regular diet may be started. Do not use a straw for several days, since this may dislodge the blood clot.

Bruising: Some bruising may be seen on the face after the surgery. If this happens, do not be alarmed.

Oral Hygiene: Rinsing, spitting, and brushing should be avoided on the day of tooth removal. Starting on the day after tooth removal, gentle rinsing with warm salt water is encouraged. Brushing should also be resumed, being careful to avoid the extraction site. Good oral hygiene is important to normal wound healing. Do not spit or swish vigorously.

Activities: Activities should be minimal for the first 24 hours. Rest quietly with your head elevated. Do not smoke for at least 3 days. Do not expect to return to work or normal activities immediately. 2–3 days of rest is recommended. Vigorous physical activities and sports should be avoided until the extraction site is feeling good, and you are able to eat a normal diet. Contact sports should be avoided for 1 week after tooth removal. Musical wind instruments should not be played for at least 7–10 days after tooth removal.

Numbness: When a lower tooth is removed, there is a chance the nerve in the lower jaw may be slightly disturbed. This may lead to a numbness of your chin, lower lip, and your lower teeth on that side. No one can determine exactly how long this will remain, but it is rarely permanent.

Taste and Odor: After the tooth removal, a bad taste or odor may occur. This is usually due to a lack of appropriate cleaning in the area. Mouthwash may be used along with normal rinsing and brushing.

Uncommon Problems: Many people fear the possibility of a dry socket. If you have pain that is not relieved by the pain medication or aspirin, this may be the case. If possible, you should return to our office. If you notice swelling after 5–7 days, please contact our office.

Emergency: If there is any difficulty in breathing, fever, excessive bleeding or any other problems following your extraction, please call the office immediately or go to the emergency room.

***Women, please note: Some antibiotics may interfere with the effectiveness of your birth control pills. Please check with your pharmacist.