

TOOTH EXTRACTION

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

DAY OF EXTRACTION-

FIRST HOUR: Bite down gently but firmly on the cotton gauze that have been placed over the surgical areas. Do not change the gauze for the first 30 min. If active bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes. The gauze may then be changed as necessary (typically every 30 to 45 minutes). It is best to moisten the gauze with tap water and gently place for more comfortable positioning.

EXERCISE CARE: Do not disturb the surgical area today. Do **NOT** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects. You may brush your teeth gently. PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE or use a drinking STRAW for at least 48 hours, since this is very detrimental to healing and may cause a dry socket.

OOZING: Intermittent bleeding or oozing is normal. It may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the surgical areas and biting down firmly for 30 – 60 minutes. When the gauze is not saturated with blood and is just spotted (red and white on gauze) you can remove the gauze pack. You can replace with new gauze if bleeding recurs.

PERSISTENT BLEEDING: Bleeding should never be severe. If so, it usually means that the gauze packs are being clenched between teeth only and are not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the gauze. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a **tea bag** (soak in very hot water then squeeze to damp-dry and wrap in a moist gauze) for 20 or 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

SWELLING: Swelling is often associated with oral surgery. It can be minimized by using a cold pack, ice bag or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the **first 24 – 48 hours** after surgery. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed.

PAIN: Unfortunately, most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. We recommend taking some form of pain medication (Tylenol or Advil) before the anesthetic wears off. You will be more comfortable if you stay ahead of any discomfort you might experience. If necessary you will be provided with a prescription for strong pain medication. Please make sure that while taking any prescription medications you are not operating a motor vehicle or heavy machinery. If you do not achieve adequate relief with the prescription you may supplement each pill with an analgesic such as (Advil or Tylenol). Some people may even require two of the pain pills at one time during early stages (but that may add to the risk of upset stomach).

Remember that the most severe discomfort is usually within the first six hours after the anesthetic wears off; after that your need for medicine should decrease.

NAUSEA: Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food and taking the pill with water. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications but call us if you do not feel better.

Classic regular Coca Cola may help with nausea.

DIET: Eat nourishing food that can be taken comfortably. Avoid extremely hot foods. Do NOT use a straw for the first few days after surgery. Confine your diet for the first day to liquids or pureed/soft foods only, such as: soup, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc. It is important to take nourishment regularly to will feel better, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

SHARP EDGES: If you feel something hard or sharp edges in the surgical site it is likely you are feeling bone fragments which once supported the extracted teeth. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

MOUTH RINSES: Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use ¼ teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and gently rinse.

BRUSHING: Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery, avoiding vigorous brushing.

WARM APPLICATIONS: After the 2nd day you may apply warm compresses to the skin over the areas of swelling, if necessary use (hot water bottle, warm moist towels, heating pad). Use 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. This method will decrease swelling or stiffness and soothe tender areas.

HEALING: Normal healing after a tooth extraction should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there might be swelling. On the third day you should be more comfortable and although swollen, you can usually begin a more substantial diet. The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual and steady improvement.

It is our desire that you are as comfortable as possible in your recovery. Following these instructions will greatly reduce your discomfort and aid you in quicker healing. If you have any unusual pain or bleeding, please call the office, at **(561) 737-3200**.