

Care Following Extractions

Proper care of your mouth following extractions can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area.

1. PROTECT THE BLOOD CLOT

Maintain firm pressure by biting on gauze that has been placed over the surgical area. Change the gauze every 2 hours until the bleeding stops. In most cases the bleeding should be controlled within an hour or two. Slight seepage is normal, as is a pinkish tinge to the saliva, which may continue for several hours. In cases of persistent bleeding (several hours), biting on a damp tea bag may be useful. If in doubt, contact our office.

2. AVOID RINSING

Do not rinse with anything for at least 24 hours. Rinsing too soon may disturb the blood clot and cause problems. After 8-12 hours, start rinsing with warm salt water (1/2 tsp. salt in 8 oz. warm water) every 2-3 hours and particularly after eating to assure no food particles enter the extraction site.

3. DON'T SMOKE

Try to avoid smoking for at least 2-3 days as smoking can dislodge the clot leading to a dry socket.

4. AVOID THE EXTRACTION SITE

Avoid all excessive activity; do not pick at the surgical area. Do not drink through a straw, and do not drink alcohol for the first few days.

5. TAKE MEDICATION

Take medication as prescribed. It is normal to experience some discomfort following an extraction. This will vary according to the difficulty of the extraction.

6. EAT AND DRINK WELL

It is important to maintain adequate food and liquid intake following the surgery. Often, due to soreness, it is difficult to chew hard foods, so try to get adequate nutrition with soft foods, and/or diet supplements, such as ENSURE.

6. TOOTH BRUSH EVERYWHERE ELSE

Tooth brushing should be done in the area of the mouth not involved with the surgical procedure. A clean mouth heals faster.

- If sutures (and/or medication dressing) have been placed, **BE SURE TO RETURN FOR THEIR REMOVAL** when the appointment is given. Usually this is in 5-7 days following surgery. If a suture comes loose after a few days (as sometimes happens), it still may be necessary to be seen for removal of the medicated dressing (if one has been placed).
- Application of an ice pack to the face near the surgical site (20 min on and 10 min off) for the first hour can help reduce swelling.
- Keep head slightly elevated if you lie down

Contact our office for any information if you have any questions.

462-1540