

Taking Care of Yourself after an Extraction

Following these instructions will help ensure successful healing following your tooth extraction.

When to call us

It is normal to experience some pain and discomfort for several days following your extraction, however call us right away if you experience any of the following

- Heavy or increased bleeding
- Pain or swelling that increases or continues at the same level for more than 3 or 4 days
- A bad taste or foul odor in your mouth
- A reaction to a medication

During the first 24 hours

It is important that a blood clot forms on the extraction site to stop bleeding, reduce pain and speed the healing process. To protect the clot and avoid the pain of a dry socket:

- Bite on a gauze pad firmly for 30-60 minutes. Blood and saliva mix in the mouth and make it look like there is more bleeding than there really is. Some oozing is normal; however after 1 hour, repeat with a clean gauze pad if the oozing is profuse. The site could ooze for as long as 24 hours.
- Don't spit, suck through a straw or on candies
- Don't rinse your mouth, and don't floss or brush next to the extraction site
- Don't smoke or use tobacco products. Avoid tobacco for as long as possible—at least 72 hours, as it slows the healing process.
- Don't sneeze or cough, take allergy or sinus medications as necessary
- Limit yourself to calm activities, and elevate your head with pillows when you lie down to reduce bleeding
- Don't drink hot, carbonated or alcoholic drinks.

Take pain medication before anesthetic has worn off or as recommended to keep discomfort under control. Do not take more pain medications than directed.

To reduce swelling, apply ice over the area—20 min on, 20 min off. A bag of frozen peas makes a great ice pack.

Be sure to eat nutritious foods (softer diet recommended), chewing on the side away from the extraction site. It is very important to drink lots of fluids.

After the first 24 hours

- Begin to eat normally as soon as it is comfortable
- Resume brushing and flossing, but continue to be gentle around the site
- If antibiotics were prescribed, take them until gone even if you are feeling better
- Moist heat can be applied to reduce soreness
- Warm salt water rinses should be used 3-4 x/day to help reduce swelling and keep the area clean. Use one teaspoon of salt per glass of warm water.

If you have any questions or concerns call our office at 320-629-2282