

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

DENTAL EXTRACTION

FOR THE REST OF THE DAY

- Don't spit. Use a tissue to clean your mouth as needed, or swallow your saliva.
- Do not use a drinking straw. Drink straight from the cup.
- Do not smoke.
- Keep your fingers and tongue away from the surgical area.

Spitting, using a straw, smoking, and touching the surgery area can move the blood clot that is forming and cause bleeding in the area. Smoking can also increase the chances of an infection or dry socket.

BLEEDING:

There may be some minor bleeding after tooth extraction surgery. It will usually decrease quickly and stop within an hour or two after surgery. A little oozing is normal and can continue for several hours.

1. Hold the gauze pad on the surgical area with some pressure (biting) for 30–45 minutes.
2. Remove the gauze after 30–45 minutes and, if you are still bleeding, replace it with a new gauze. It is important to ensure that the gauze is directly on the surgical site. Applying firm pressure for another hour should stop the bleeding.
3. If you find that this is not working after your third try, use a moistened tea bag instead of the gauze. The tannic acid in the tea will help it form a clot and stop the bleeding.
4. If none of this works, call the office.

SWELLING:

Most patients will experience some swelling after mouth surgery. It can be mild or severe and is different for each patient. Swelling may increase during the first 24–48 hours before it begins to decrease. It can last several days. Some bruises may also appear on the face.

Use an ice pack on the cheek or face next to the surgical site. Keep it on for 15–20 minutes, then take it off for 10 minutes, and repeat until you go to sleep. Start over the next day.

Sleep with your head slightly elevated (above your heart). This will control the swelling. On the third day, switch to humid heat instead of ice packs. This will reduce the swelling more quickly.



DIET:

When the local anesthetic wears off, you can eat bland foods such as mashed potatoes, pasta, soup, or scrambled eggs, although you will probably only feel like eating ice cream or drinking fresh liquids the first day. Please do not drink through a straw for the first week after surgery.

You can return to a regular diet when you feel comfortable, although it is recommended that you avoid carbonated beverages for 2–3 days, and avoid crunchy foods such as popcorn, potato chips, peanuts, etc., for 2 weeks after surgery. Finally, please stay well fed and hydrated.

ORAL HYGIENE:

You can start rinsing tomorrow, very gently, with a little warm salty water (1 teaspoon of table salt in 8 ounces of warm water). Do this after every meal and before falling asleep for a week. Do not use mouthwashes that contain alcohol for the first week as they can burn you. You can brush your teeth, avoiding the surgery area, either tonight or tomorrow morning. Be careful! Do not spit or rinse strongly.

SUTURES:

The sutures used during your procedure are soluble and will fall off on their own, unless you've been told otherwise. This usually happens in the first week after surgery, but the time can vary from 4–10 days.

GENERAL ANESTHESIA:

If you were given anesthesia during your procedure, you must remain under the supervision of a responsible adult for the remainder of the day.

MEDICINES:

They probably gave you one or more prescription drugs. Take them all as directed on the container. Call us if you experience severe nausea or diarrhea, or cannot swallow your pills.

Antibiotics: Continue until container is empty. Don't leave it unfinished.

Pain Medicine: Pain medicine usually needs to be taken on a scheduled basis (every 4–6 hours) for the first 24 hours and as needed thereafter. Remember that narcotics can make you drowsy, so don't drive, swim, use machinery, and don't drink alcoholic beverages while taking them.

EXERCISE:

Once you are no longer taking the pain medicine, you can resume your normal activities as you sit down. At first, exercise and other recreational activities slowly, slowly increasing your activity over several days until you return to your normal routine.

Please follow these instructions where possible. They are designed to help you heal quickly and comfortably.



QUESTIONS?

We are here to help you.

If you have any questions about your procedure or treatment plan, please contact us at any time.

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