



Patient Instructions –

EXTRACTIONS

Follow these instructions carefully to ensure the successful healing of your tooth extraction.

Before the procedure:

- **Schedule some time off**, so you can take it easy for several days after your tooth extraction.
- **Arrange to have a friend or family member drive you home.**
- **We may recommend that you take an anti-inflammatory medication** before your appointment.

During the first 24 hours:

- **It's important that a blood clot forms** on the extraction site to stop bleeding, reduce pain, and speed healing. To protect the clot and avoid the pain of dry socket:
 - ✓ Bite on a gauze pad firmly for 45 to 60 minutes. If bleeding or oozing continues, bite down on a clean pad or moist tea bag for 45 to 60 minutes.
 - ✓ Don't rinse your mouth, and don't brush or floss next to the site.
 - ✓ Don't smoke or use tobacco. Avoid tobacco for at least 72 hours because it slows healing and you may develop dry socket.
 - ✓ Sleep on an old pillow case and sheets in case of bleeding during the night.
 - ✓ 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, and avoid hot or spicy foods.
- **To control discomfort**, take pain medication before the anesthetic has worn off or as recommended.
- **To keep swelling to a minimum**, use an ice bag over the area, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.
- **When the numbness has worn off completely**, drink lots of fluids and eat only soft nutritious foods, chewing on the opposite side.

After the first 24 hours:

- **Begin to eat normally** as soon as it's comfortable.
- **Resume brushing and flossing**, but clean gently around the site for about a week.
- **If antibiotics were prescribed**, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.
- **Reduce soreness or swelling** by applying moist heat. Swelling usually starts to go down after 48 hours.
- **Further reduce swelling** by rinsing your mouth very gently with warm salt water. Use about one teaspoon of salt per glass of warm water. Rinse two to three times a day for the week following the extraction.

When to call us:

- **Heavy or increased bleeding**
- **Pain or swelling** that increases or continues beyond two or three days
- **A reaction** to the medication
- **If there is an emergency** after hours please contact Dr. Ruegsegger at 985.807.4575.