

EXTRACTION – AT HOME CARE

The following information has been designed to help you properly care for your mouth after an extraction:

1. **FEELING:** The anesthesia will begin to wear off in about 3 hours. Until that time, avoid all hot foods and liquids and be very careful about chewing especially if your lip and tongue are numb. This is to prevent accidentally burning or biting the lips, cheeks, or tongue until the feeling returns.
2. **GAUZE PACK:** Fold a piece of gauze in ½, and roll it up like a sleeping blanket and place it over the extraction site. Hold the gauze in place by biting on it for at least an hour. Change the gauze as needed (when it is slobbery and you are tired of it, put in a fresh piece). It is normal for the surgical site to bleed slightly or ooze for up to 12 hours. If you lie down, keep your head elevated, to keep it from bleeding more during that time.
3. **ACTIVITY:** Refrain from any unnecessary exertion. Avoid running, jogging, or any athletic activity for the first 24 hours after surgery. Excessive activities may cause it to start bleeding again.
4. **MEDICATIONS:** Unless we gave you a prescription, take 2 Ibuprofen within an hour of leaving the office. Then, 2 hours later, take 2 more. Then every 3-4 hours take 2-4 more if-and-as you need them. When you can go 6 hours without taking any, you don't need anymore.
5. **DIET:** It is important to maintain good nutrition during the healing phase. Eat anything you feel like you can eat comfortably. Drink plenty of fluids. **DO NOT DRINK THROUGH A STRAW; DO NOT DRINK CARBONATED DRINKS FOR 48 HOURS.** Drinking through a straw creates suction in your mouth, and can cause you to lose or dislodge the blood clot. The “bubbling action” of carbonated drinks will loosen a blood clot. If you do not feel like chewing, use a meal substitute such as Ensure, Slim Fast, or Instant Breakfast.
6. **ORAL HYGIENE:** Clean the rest of your mouth as usual. **DO NOT USE ANY MOUTHWASH FOR A WEEK. INSTEAD, USE WARM SALT WATER. COAT YOUR MOUTH WITH SALTY WATER. THIS KEEPS THE BACTERIAL COUNT DOWN IN YOUR MOUTH.**

DO NOT SMOKE FOR THE FIRST 48 HOURS AFTER SURGERY...IN FACT, JUST QUIT!

Questions you might have or possible complications to be aware of:

DRY SOCKET: Is sometimes a problem after surgery. A dry socket means the blood clot comes loose, does not form correctly, or comes out. The bone has to be protected by the blood clot. It is common in smokers and women who are taking birth control pills or hormonal therapy to experience a dry socket. A dry socket will start out mild and escalate to severe pain rapidly (4-10 hours). It normally occurs in 36 - 72 hours after the extraction.

EXCESSIVE or PROLONGED BLEEDING may occur especially if you take aspirin or other blood thinning medications. Biting on a wet tea bag over the socket instead of gauge can often stop bleeding.

NAUSEA OR VOMITTING: Do not take any medications on an empty stomach or you will “toss your cookies”.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office or the after-hours number above.

Pilot Point Dentistry