

## **YOUR CARE AFTER SURGERY** (IMPORTANT, PLEASE READ)

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### **WHAT TO DO AFTER EXTRACTION OF A TOOTH**

Extractions usually heal quickly and without complications if simple precautions are taken.

Cooperation with your Oral Surgeon is important.

Remember, you have just had an operation, treat yourself with due care: don't over-exert yourself; eat regular meals. You should reduce your activity as much as possible for several hours after an extraction. This helps reduce bleeding and permits the formation of a clot in the tooth socket, which is necessary for healing.

### **REMEMBER**

1. Eat as normally as possible.
2. Take medications given you as directed.
3. There will be swelling in the surgery area.
4. There will be a small amount of bleeding the first 24-48 hours.
5. **DO NOT** drive for at least 24 hours after sedation anesthesia.

### **BLEEDING**

Some bleeding may continue for a time after the extraction. To help control the bleeding follow this procedure:

1. Take a clean gauze pad and **GENTLY** wipe the blood from the mouth and from over the extraction wound.
2. Fold another clean gauze into a thick pad and place it directly on the bleeding spot.
3. Close the teeth tightly over this pad so that there is pressure against the bleeding spot.
4. Maintain the pressure for about 30 minutes. Repeat if necessary.
5. **DO NOT SMOKE** for 10 days.
6. If bleeding is heavy, call our office for instructions.

### **FOR RELIEF OF PAIN**

1. If given a prescription, take that medication as directed.
2. Always have some food settled in your stomach before taking pain pills.
3. **DO NOT** take pain medication on an empty stomach. They may cause nausea.
4. If no prescription was given, you may use Extra Strength Tylenol or Advil at your choice.

### **WHAT TO EAT**

To help the healing process, you should try not to miss a meal after a tooth extraction. Soft, nutritious foods, such as soft-boiled eggs, chopped meat, custards, milk, and soup, may be eaten without disturbing the clot. Eat these as often as you can for the first few days. Then, add solid foods as soon as they can be chewed comfortably. Also, take in plenty of fluids.

### **SWELLING**

Some swelling is a frequent reaction to the extraction of a tooth and is not cause for concern. There will also be some discomfort for a while after the effects of an anesthetic have worn off. Much swelling and discomfort may be prevented by applying cold to the affected side of the face immediately after an extraction. Use an ice bag or a cold, moist cloth for about 30 minutes of every hour for twelve hours after the extraction. The cold should be applied 30 minutes, then removed for 30 minutes. Repeat for each of the first 24 hours. The following days apply heat instead of ice.

### **STITCHES**

If you have stitches in your mouth, you should return in 4-7 days to have them checked. Most of the time they are dissolvable and will come out on their own.

### **RINSING THE MOUTH**

The blood clot should be given time to form and should not be disturbed. Therefore, the mouth should not be rinsed, nor the teeth cleaned, during the day of the extraction. After the first day, use warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon salt in a glass of warm water) and rinse the mouth gently after meals or at least 3 times daily.

After the first day has passed the mouth should be cleaned and the teeth flossed and brushed. It is important to maintain these habits of oral hygiene so that the extraction may heal well and not become infected. However, take care not to disturb the blood clot for a few days.

**Refrain from smoking for 10 days.**