

Post Operative Instructions

The extraction site may have an open socket where a blood clot will form in the beginning of the healing process. If the blood clot is lost early or the healing process is disturbed, it can lead to a painful infection called a dry socket. Below is a list of things you should do and things you should avoid to help with your healing:

Wound care

- always wash your hands before placing or removing gauze
- Bite firmly on the gauze pack that has been placed for 60 minutes, change gauze as necessary for the next 24 hours. Make sure gauze has been moistened prior to placement and bite firmly.

Bleeding

- Some blood will ooze from the area of surgery and is normal.
- Do not spit, use a straw, smoke or drink carbonated or alcoholic beverages following surgery
- If bleeding begins again, place a moistened gauze pack directly over the area of surgery and bite firmly for 30 minutes.
- Keep your head elevated with several pillows or sit in a lounge chair.

Discomfort

- Some discomfort is normal after surgery. It can be controlled but not eliminated by taking the pain pills your dentist has prescribed.
- Do not drive or drink alcohol if you take prescription pain pills.

Diet.

- It is important to drink a large volume of fluids.
- Maintain a soft food diet for the remainder of the day i.e.: warm soup, yogurt, mashed potatoes may be the most comfortable for the first day.

Oral hygiene

- Do not forcefully rinse your mouth or brush near the surgery site for the first 8 hours after surgery
- After that, rinse gently with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in 8 oz of warm water) every 4 hours.
- Brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery.

Swelling.

- Swelling after surgery is a normal body reaction. It reaches its maximum about 48 hours after surgery and usually lasts 4 to 6 days.
- Applying ice packs over the area of surgery for the first 12 hours helps control the swelling and may help the area to be more comfortable.

Rest.

- Avoid strenuous activity for 12 hours after your surgery.

Bruising.

- You may experience some mild bruising in the area of your surgery. This is a normal response in some people and should not be cause for alarm. It will disappear in 7 to 14 days.

Stiffness

- After surgery you may experience jaw muscle stiffness and limited opening of your mouth. This is normal and will improve in 5 to 10 days.

Stitches.

- If stitches have been placed in the area of your surgery, they will dissolve on their own.

Call the Clinic if:

- You experience excessive discomfort that you cannot control with pain pills.
- You have bleeding that you cannot control by biting on the gauze.
- You have increased swelling after the third day following your surgery.
- You feel you have a fever.

If the dental clinic is closed, call the after hour Nurse Advice Line at 1-800-613-0560 or 911 for a medical emergency