



Instructions Following Tooth Extractions

Today:

Wound Care

- Use an ice pack directly on your cheek every hour for twenty minutes. This will reduce pain and swelling.
- Do not spit forcefully; let saliva drip out of your mouth and wipe with a towel. Do not sip hard on a straw.
- Do not touch the wound in your mouth. Do not rinse it directly.
- If oozing of blood occurs, it is normal and can last up to 24 hours. To control bleeding, bite firmly on gauze for 30 min. without opening your mouth to talk. In rare cases, a tea bag (regular, not herbal) which contains tannic acid may be used in place of gauze to encourage blood clotting. Please call the office if bleeding doesn't stop or is heavy for too long.
- Tonight, brush gently to within 2 teeth of the stitches. Then rinse gently with warm salt water.
- **DO NOT SMOKE.**

Medications

- Take ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) 400 mg every 4-6 hours even in the absence of pain today. It will help reduce swelling and the need for stronger pain medication.
- Take the steroid anti-inflammatory medication as directed, if prescribed.
- Take the prescription pain medication every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. This can cause nausea and stomach cramping, so take it with a full glass of water. It is OK to take ibuprofen regularly, and add the narcotic medication as needed for breakthrough pain.
- Take antibiotics as directed until the bottle is empty. Antibiotics can make birth control pills ineffective.

Activity

- Do not participate in any physical activities today. This includes lifting anything, brisk walking, sports, etc. No heavy lifting. If the blood clot gets dislodged it will cause a painful dry socket.
- **If you took a sedative pill** (Triazolam or Halcion), you will want to go home and sleep. You should be monitored periodically while you sleep. You may be very confused when you wake up. The effects may last 4 hours and rarely last more than 8 hours, but due to residual effects **you should not drive until tomorrow.**

Starting Tomorrow:

- The pain and swelling will be greatest. It begins to taper off and should be gone by 6 days. Take ibuprofen as needed every 4-6 hours if you are in pain, using the narcotic medication only for breakthrough pain.
- You can be more active, but do not exercise or lift weights. Normal activity can resume on day 3.
- Watch for signs of infection: swelling that gets worse after 3 days instead of better, fever, chills. Let us know if the pain is not resolving by 3 days.
- "Dry socket" is a painful delayed healing response which may occur from day 3 to day 6 after surgery and is associated with forceful rinsing or spitting the first day, too much physical activity, using a straw, smoking, birth control pills, difficult surgery, and pre-existing infection. They are twice as common in patients over 30. Watch for throbbing pain on the side of the face which may be directed toward the ear. In mild cases increasing pain medication may be enough to control the symptoms, but usually a sedative dressing needs to be placed.

Please call the office at (860) 870-9031 to contact the doctor if you have any questions or discomfort.