



### Tooth Extraction Post Surgical Care

1. **HEALING.** After a tooth is extracted the area fills with a clot, and then slowly heals over the next weeks and months by a process of bone breakdown and build up. As the extraction area heals the site will shrink and remodel often resulting in a concavity. The key to successful healing is to keep the initial blood clot intact, so the later steps of healing can occur properly. Many of the instructions are related to preventing the dislodgment of this clot.
2. **ACTIVITY.** Reduce your activity immediately after surgery, and resume normal activities when you feel back to normal. Avoid high impact/strenuous activity for 48 hours.
3. **DO NOT SMOKE .** The number one reason for delayed healing after an extraction is due to smoking. This can create a dry socket, thus making your healing delayed and significantly more painful. *Please refrain from smoking for at least 48 hours.*
4. **DO NOT RINSE MOUTH TODAY.** Tomorrow rinse mouth **gently** every 3 to 4 hours (especially after meals) using one-quarter teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water. Continue rinses for several days.
5. **BLEEDING.** Following extractions some bleeding is to be expected for up to 24 hours. If persistent bleeding occurs, place a moist tea bag over the extraction site and bite down firmly for one-half hour. Repeat if necessary. If the site is still oozing at bed time, it would be helpful to protect your pillow.
6. **SWELLING.** Some swelling is normal and tends to peak at 48 hours. Ice packs or chopped ice wrapped in a bag should be applied to area of the face adjacent to the area operated to minimize swelling. Place the ice 15 minutes on/ 15 minutes off for 4-6 hours. Ice chips or cold beverages can help in the mouth as well.
7. **PAIN.** Mild to moderate pain is normal for up to 48 hours. Pain that starts 3-5 days after the procedure is a common sign of infection. Please contact the office if this occurs.
8. **EATING.** Light diet is advisable during the first 24 hours. Softer foods are typically easier to chew since your jaw muscles may be sore as well. Avoid eating on the extraction area. Also avoid hot foods and beverages, this can increase bleeding and bruising.  
**Foods to consider:** smoothies or milk shakes (NO STRAW), yogurt, eggs, pasta, potatoes, luke-warm soup.
9. **BEVERAGE.** It is advisable to not drink alcoholic beverages after a dental extraction, especially if consuming with prescribed medications. **DO NOT DRINK OUT OF STRAWS.** Avoid carbonated beverages and hot drinks/liquids for 48 hours.
10. **BONY EDGES.** Small sharp bone fragments may work up through the gums during healing. If annoying, please call the office and we will arrange a time for their simple removal.

If any unusual symptoms occur, please call the office at once. Please contact Dr. Alexander if after hours on his cellular phone: **(561) 414-3567.**