

## Home Care Instructions: After a Tooth Extraction

- **Initial healing period:** usually takes one to two weeks, and you'll likely experience some swelling for the first 24 hours.
- **Anesthetic:** The anesthetic we use typically leaves your lips, teeth and tongue feeling numb for 4-6 hours after the appointment. You should avoid chewing until the numbness has completely worn off.
- **Medications:** You may be given some medicines to take after your extraction. Take these as directed. Your medicines may include the following:
  - Penicillin: To reduce your chance of infection. Take four times a day until all the way gone.
  - Medrol: This helps reduce swelling. Take this four times a day until gone.
  - Hydrocodone: These are for pain. Take them only as needed and as directed. Don't take on an empty stomach. This medicine will make you drowsy. You shouldn't take this with anything else that makes you sleepy and you shouldn't drive or operate heavy machinery while taking these.
- **Nausea:** To avoid do not take pain medication on an empty stomach
- **Control Bleeding:** We will give you a supply of gauze to place over the bleeding area. Change the gauze every 30-45 minutes or until the bleeding stops. You can also bite gently but firmly on a moist tea bag for 20 minutes, and keep your head elevated with pillows to help control bleeding. Be sure to call if bleeding persists or increases.
- **Ice Packs:** You can also decrease pain and swelling by applying an ice pack - 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off - for the first six hours following the extraction.
- **Blood clot:** A blood clot will form on the extraction site. This clot is vital to the healing process. Avoid touching the extraction site, drinking through a straw, spitting or swishing vigorously, heavy lifting or jolting of the head.
- **Blowing your nose or sneezing violently:** can also dislodge the blood clot and impair healing, so if you have an upper respiratory infection or suffer from allergies, be sure to have the appropriate sinus medication on hand.
- **Rinse:** Do not rinse your mouth the day of the surgery. 24 hours following the procedure, you can rinse with a warm salt-water solution (dissolve one teaspoon of salt with one cup of warm water); gently swish and spit carefully. You should do this 2-3 times a day following the extraction.
- **Smoking, Alcohol drinks, or allowing food particles to pack into the tooth's socket:** Should be avoided for they will significantly affect the healing process.
- **Relax:** as much as possible and avoid all strenuous activities for the first 24 hours following surgery.
- **Food:** Once the numbness has worn off, you should eat, as nourishment is important to the healing process. Limit your diet to soft foods like yogurt, soft soups (not hot), ice cream, or soft-cooked eggs for the first 48 hours.
- **Drink:** at least eight large glasses of water or fruit juice each day. Avoid carbonated or hot beverages.
- **Oral Hygiene:** Continue brushing and flossing being extra gentle near the extraction sites.

Please call if any questions arise. 801-374-8244