

After Tooth Extractions

Post-Operative Instructions for Tooth Extractions:

- Some discomfort after a tooth extraction is normal. The initial healing period usually takes one to two weeks. You will experience the maximum amount of swelling within the first two days, inside the mouth and possibly around the eye. The area around your eye may also become discolored, which may be alleviated with a warm compress.
- Avoid chewing for at least the first two hours after surgery or until the numbness has completely worn off.
- Once the numbness is gone, it is important to take in nourishment. Consume easy to eat foods such as soups, yogurt, milkshakes, oat meal, or eggs. Remain on a soft diet for the first two to three days, and also drink plenty of fluids.
- If an antibiotic is prescribed, take it to completion. Failure to complete an antibiotic prescription can complicate or delay healing.
- To help control pain and minimize swelling, use an ice pack 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the first several hours after surgery. Do not continue with ice after this initial period.
- Bleeding will generally be present for some time after oral surgery. To control the bleeding, bite on a gauze pad for the first 20 to 60 minutes after extraction. Bleeding should gradually slow to a stop within the first two hours.
- If bleeding seems to be more than seepage, bite on a tea bag soaked in cold water for twenty minutes.
- A blood clot will form in the tooth socket within the first several hours. The clot is necessary for proper healing. To prevent damage or loss of the clot, avoid smoking for at least 24 hours. In addition, avoid drinking through a straw, rinsing your mouth, and cleaning the area with a tooth brush.
- If at all possible, avoid sneezing and blowing your nose, as these can also dislodge a blood clot.
- After 24 hours, gently clean the surgical area by rinsing with warm salt water or with any post-surgical rinse provided by your dentist.
- Use any pain relievers as prescribed by your dentist. Start using the medication before the dental anesthetic wears off. If you do not have, or do not want to use a prescription-strength pain reliever, then use non-aspirin, over-the-counter pain medication such as ibuprofen (Advil) or Tylenol—assuming you are not allergic to, or have a medical condition/s that prevent using such pain relievers. Remember to eat before taking pain medication to avoid nausea.
- If you experience any unusual problems, if bleeding has not stopped after 24 hours, or if pain and swelling worsen after 48 hours, contact our office for instructions.