



Patient Post-Operative Instructions for Extractions

PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.

The after effects of oral surgery vary per individual. You may or may not experience some of these symptoms.

PROPER GAUZE USE FOLLOWING SURGERY:

Oozing is normal for a couple of DAYS following an extraction. This gauze are to be used ONLY for EXCESSIVE bleeding. We recommend biting on the gauze for no more than 30-40 minutes. Use FIRM pressure WITHOUT changing or talking. Then remove the gauze and LEAVE IT OUT OF YOUR MOUTH. The reason we don't want you to keep changing and replacing gauze is that it may irritate the extraction site and the dry gauze will act like a sponge drawing blood out of the socket. This delays the normal clotting process of the body. In most cases, you should not need to use this gauze when you get home; it is given to you for convenience in the unlikely event that excessive bleeding occurs.

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

STITCHES: Your stitches will dissolve within 4 to 7 days, unless you are instructed otherwise. If they become irritating, or do not dissolve, they can be removed sooner if necessary.

BLEEDING: Some bleeding is normal and saliva tinged with blood may be present for several days. The gauze pack, which was placed over the surgery site, can be removed 30 minutes after surgery. If there is no active bleeding, leave the gauze out. For continued bleeding, lie down with your head elevated, place a fresh gauze pad over the extraction site, and apply continuous pressure. Remember no spitting or rinsing for 24 hours. The taste of blood may persist for several days following surgery. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy, substitute a moist tea bag (first soak in hot water, allow to cool, squeeze dry and wrap in moist gauze) on the area for 30-40 minutes. If bleeding continues, please call our office.

PAIN AND MEDICATIONS: Unfortunately most surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. Take the pain medication prescribed as directed before the local anesthetic wears off. The local anesthetic administered during your surgery can last 2-12 hours depending on the type of anesthetic given. Eating food or drinking large volumes of fluids prior to taking the narcotic pain medication will decrease the chance of nausea or stomach upset side effects. Avoid milk products if nauseous. Taking Ibuprofen (200 mg every 50 lbs of weight) every 6 hours, will improve your pain control, decrease swelling and lessen the need for pain medications. It is okay to take ibuprofen with the narcotic pain medication.

BIRTH CONTROL PILLS: The effectiveness of birth control may be decreased due to antibiotic administration. Pregnancy can be the result of ineffective birth control pills. If you are prescribed antibiotics and are currently taking oral contraceptives, you should use an alternative method of birth control for the remainder of this cycle. If you have additional concerns, please contact your primary care physician or obstetrician.

SWELLING: Swelling is to be expected and usually reaches its maximum in 48 hours. To minimize swelling, keep your head elevated and apply cold packs to the face adjacent to the surgical area while awake. This should be applied for 20 minutes, and then removed for 20 minutes during the first 24-48 hours. The regular use of Ibuprofen may also decrease the degree of swelling. After 48 hours, it is usually best to switch from using the cold pack to applying moist heat to the same area until swelling has receded. Bruising may also occur, but should disappear soon. Tightness of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening the mouth. Keep lips moist with cream or Vaseline to prevent cracking or chapping.

DIET: Eat any nourishing foods that can be taken with comfort. It is advisable to confine the first few days' food intake to bland liquids, or soft textured foods. Avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds or popcorn, which may get lodged in the socket areas. Avoid sucking through a straw. Over the next several days you may progress to more solid foods. Proper nourishment aids in the healing process. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal diet as much as possible and follow your physician's instructions regarding your insulin schedule.



TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL: Please refrain from smoking for 7 days after surgery. Smoking delays healing, prolongs bleeding, and is generally detrimental to your health. The use of smokeless tobacco at any time is not recommended. Please do not drink alcohol if you are taking a prescribed pain medication. Alcohol is not recommended for at least one week after surgery.

FOOD SUGGESTIONS: While you are numb, avoid hot drinks and food. You may have liquid and mushy, soft textured foods, such as slushes, apple sauce, Jell-O, pudding, cottage cheese, yogurt, soups, mashed potatoes, oatmeal, scrambled eggs, soft pasta, etc. Dairy products may cause nausea in some patients the day of surgery.

ORAL HYGIENE AND CARE: For the first 24 hours, do not rinse your mouth, brush your teeth, spit or use a straw when drinking. This may dislodge the blood clot or interrupt the normal course of healing. After the first 24 hours resume gentle brushing (away from the surgical area) and rinsing with warm salt water (1/2 tsp. of salt in an 8 ounce glass of water). Rinse the mouth every 2-3 hours, especially after meals until the area has healed (usually 7 to 10 days.) If you are given a prescription for Peridex (Chlorhexidine), please rinse for 1 minute 3-4 times each day with 1 capful (in addition to the salt water rinses). You may start the Peridex the day after the surgery before going to bed if no bleeding is present. It is imperative to keep your mouth clean, since the accumulation of food debris may promote infection. If you are given an irrigating syringe, start using it 7 days after the surgery to keep the sockets clean. Irrigate any open socket with warm salt water, especially after meals until the sockets have closed. If immediate dentures have been inserted, please do not remove for 24 hours. The dentures should be removed for the salt water rinses and then reinserted.

DRY SOCKET: The blood clot on the surgical site may be lost causing a dry socket (usually on the 3rd to 5th day). There will be a noticeable, distinct, persistent pain in the jaw area. The pain often radiates toward the ear and forward along the jaw, which may cause other teeth to ache. Factors which contribute to a dry socket include: infection, smoking, poor oral hygiene, vigorous rinsing and/or spitting, birth control pills. It is more common in the lower jaw. If you do not see steady improvement during the first few days after surgery, or if severe pain persists, please call the office to report these symptoms.

SKIN DISCOLORATION: Bruising may occur and is usually limited to the cheek and neck area near the surgical site. This is caused by bleeding under the gum tissue of the mouth in the area of the surgery. If discoloration occurs, it often takes a week or more for this to completely disappear.

NUMBNESS: Loss of sensation of the lip and chin may occur, usually following lower wisdom teeth removal. This is usually temporary and disappears within a few days or weeks. Occasionally, some numbness may persist for months due to the close association of the roots of the teeth to the nerve that supplies sensation to the teeth and lips.

ANTIBIOTICS: If you were given an antibiotic prescription, take all of them as directed until they are gone. Women: some antibiotics can reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills. Use alternate birth control methods for two months.

SINUS: If your sinus was involved in the procedure, you should avoid blowing your nose or playing a wind musical instrument for one week. Use of decongestant medications might be recommended.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS: You may need to return to the office to have sutures removed, or just for a brief follow-up healing check. Please call your dentist if you have:

- uncontrollable pain
- excessive or severe bleeding
- marked fever
- excessive warm swelling occurring a few days after the procedure
- reactions to medications, especially rash, itching, or breathing problems

Following these instructions very closely will greatly help your comfort, and promote uneventful healing of the area. If any of the instructions are not followed, you might have significantly more discomfort, and the success of the procedure may be affected.

Keep in mind it is reasonable to expect your normal activities to be disrupted following a surgical procedure. It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. If you have any questions about your progress or any other symptoms you are experiencing, please call our office at:

- **Springfield 417-501-1048**
- **Rolla 573-426-5447**
- **Osage Beach 573-348-1466**
- **Mountain Grove 417-926-1160**