



AFTER YOUR TOOTH EXTRACTION APPOINTMENT

The initial healing period usually takes one to two weeks. The following instructions will aid in avoiding postoperative discomfort and complications.

Immediately following procedure

1. Encourage clotting by keeping a steady biting pressure on the gauze placed at the bleeding site by your doctor. Pressure helps reduce bleeding and permits formation of a clot in the tooth socket. Fresh gauze has been provided to you, replace the gauze when it becomes saturated. Gently remove the gauze after the local anesthesia has worn off and normal feeling has returned (one to two hours is common).
2. Some oozing of blood may persist after 24 hours. If necessary, apply gauze or a moist tea bag to the area and bite firmly for one hour. If bleeding does not slow, call the Clinic or the dentist who performed the extraction.
3. Avoid activities that could apply a suction action to the blood clot such as sucking through a straw. All tobacco products should be stopped for 5 days following extractions to prevent healing problems.
4. Reduce your activity level for several hours minimum-relax. Be careful not to bite or burn your mouth or lips. Avoid eating and unnecessary talking for a few hours-relax.
5. Your lips should be kept moist with cream or ointment. If the corners of the mouth were stretched they may dry and crack.
6. Keep fingers and tongue away from socket or surgical area.
7. Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth for 24 hours. These activities may hinder formation of a blood clot, which is necessary for proper healing.

Control Pain and Swelling

1. Swelling is normal after teeth have been extracted and should not cause alarm. Swelling is at its greatest during the first 48 hours and will normally decline after this period. If swelling increases after 48 hours, call us.
2. Immediately following procedure begin taking medication as directed by your doctor to minimize discomfort when the numbness wears off and feeling is back to normal. Take it before the local anesthetic wears off and the feeling returns too normal. Continue to take medication while pain persists.
3. For mild discomfort take Tylenol (500-1000mg) or Ibuprofen (400-600mg) with soft food every four hours. For severe pain take the pharmaceutical drug as instructed---be sure to read the directions carefully.
4. Use ice packs on surgical area (side of face) for 24 - 48 hours: apply ice 20 minutes on - 10 minutes off. Bags of frozen peas work well. Be sure to place a soft cloth (such as a wash cloth) between your face and the cold pack to avoid skin irritation. A prone position, with the head turned to one side, will allow you to lay the ice pack on to the sore muscle. Flip your body over and apply the ice pack to the other side of your face if needed for reduction of swelling and pain.

24 Hours after surgery-Oral Care begins

1. After bleeding has stopped, cautiously begin your daily mouth cleaning routine, but avoid disturbing the surgical site so as not to loosen or remove the blood clot. Rinsing is important to prevent infection and promote healing because it removes food particles and debris from the extraction site. Keeping your mouth very clean will help avoid infections, complications and delayed healing.
2. Use a warm salt-water rinse (1/2 teaspoon salt per 8 oz cup of water) to clean the surgical area. Repeat after every meal or snack for seven days minimum or as long as you need to keep the area free of debris. If the extraction site seems deeper than rinsing is able to clean, please stop by the Clinic for more information.
3. Brush your teeth twice per day and floss once per day. Brush the tongue with a wet toothbrush to keep bacteria growth down.

48 Hours after surgery

1. If the muscles of the jaw are stiff 48 hours after surgery, moist heat may help relax the sore muscles. Use warm packs on the outside of your face: apply heat 20 minutes on - 10 minutes off. Items such as a hot water bottle or a plastic bag with warm water work well. Be sure to place a soft cloth (such as a wash cloth) between your face and the warm pack to avoid skin irritation. Apply the warm packs as need to the sore face muscle/jaw areas.
2. Call our office immediately if you develop a rash, vomit, faint, or develop a temperature over 102 degrees.

Nutrition and Hydration

1. Drink plenty of fluids. (Do not use a straw!)
2. Diet may consist of soft foods, which can be easily chewed and swallowed. No seeds, nuts, rice, popcorn, hot beverages, alcohol, etc. Have your meals at the usual time. Eat what you wish, but be careful not to disturb the blood clot. Add solid foods to your diet as soon as they are comfortable to chew.

Sutures

1. Occasionally stitches, or sutures, are placed in the gums, especially if more than one tooth is removed. Although you may feel them with your tongue, it is best to leave them alone. Gut sutures will dissolve in 2-5 days. If silk or synthetic suture material is used, the dentist will remove them in 5-7 days. The space left by the tooth will feel a bit strange to you at first. Eventually, new bone and gum tissue will grow into the gap left by the extraction.

If followed, the above steps will aid in a speedy recovery. Do not hesitate to call: office 778-477-5554 Monday to Thursday 8:00 to 5:00 or Dr. Hallett's cell 250-215-1540 after hours.