

What to Do After the Extraction of a Tooth

Extraction wounds usually heal quickly and without complication, if you take these simple precautions. A blood clot must form in the tooth socket for the area to heal. Therefore, it is important to avoid activities which would disturb the clot.

DON'T create suction in your mouth:

DON'T smoke

DON'T rinse your mouth vigorously

DON'T spit

DON'T drink through a straw for 24 hours

Reduce your activity as much as possible for 24 hours after an extraction. After the first day, rinse very gently after meals with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon salt in a glass of warm water). This keeps food particles out of the surgery site.

It is important to your oral health to continue brushing and flossing at least once a day. This will help the area to heal and resist infection. It will help eliminate the bad breath and taste that is common after an extraction. Brushing the tongue will help remove blood and freshen your mouth.

Avoid alcoholic beverages and hot liquids the first day. Eat nutritious foods as often as you can to help the healing process. Drink a lot of liquids and eat soft food for a day. After the first day, you may take solid foods as soon as you can chew comfortably. Protein foods (such as meat or eggs) and fruit juices (vitamin C) are especially good.

The extraction may bleed a little for a couple of hours. Even a day later, the area may ooze a little. To help control bleeding, follow these procedures:

1. Fold a piece of clean gauze into a pad thick enough to bite on and place it directly on the bleeding spot.
2. Close the teeth firmly over this pad so that there is pressure against the bleeding spot. Don't chew on it.
3. Maintain this pressure for about 45 minutes. Repeat if necessary.
4. You may want to remove the excess spit out once in a while, but don't suck on the extraction site. If necessary, position your head over the sink and let the excess saliva naturally expel. (Remember, a lot of saliva and a little blood may look like a lot of bleeding.)
5. If heavy bleeding persists, call our office at 352-473-9090, then dampen a tea bag and place it over the extraction site. Close the teeth firmly over the tea bag so that there is pressure against the bleeding spot.

Some swelling may occur. You may also be uncomfortable for a while after the anesthetic wears off. You can prevent both the swelling and the pain by applying cold to the affected side of the face immediately after an extraction. Use an ice bag or cold moist cloth for 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off. Begin taking an anti-inflammatory before the anesthetic wears off and continue for the next 24-48 hours.

Please do not hesitate to call our office with any questions or concerns.

Thanks,

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