

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER EXTRACTION

- Do not disturb the wound. In doing so you may invite irritation, infection and/or bleeding. Be sure to chew on the opposite side for 24 hours and keep anything sharp from entering the wound.
- Do not smoke as smoking will promote bleeding and interfere with healing.
- Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours after surgery. After this time brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery.
- Avoid all rinsing for 24 hours after extraction. This is to ensure the formation of a healing blood clot which is essential to proper wound healing. Disturbance of this clot can lead to increased bleeding or the loss of the blood clot. If the clot is lost, a painful condition called dry socket may occur. Use warm salt water or mild antiseptic rinses (if prescribed) after 24 hours.
- Do not spit or suck through a straw. This will promote bleeding and may dislodge the blood clot causing a dry socket.
- You will be given verbal instructions regarding the control of postoperative bleeding. A rolled up gauze pad will be placed on the extraction site and you will be asked to change this dressing every 20 minutes or depending on the amount of bleeding that is occurring. It is normal for some blood to ooze from the area of surgery. You will also be given a package of gauze pads to take with you to use at home if the bleeding should continue.
- Some discomfort is normal after surgery. Analgesic tablets may be taken under your dentist's direction. Prescription medication, which may have been given to you, should also be taken as directed. If pain continues, contact your dentist.
- To prevent swelling, apply an ice pack or a cold towel to the outside of your face in the area of the extraction during the first 12 hours. Apply alternately, 20 minutes on then 20 minutes off, for an hour or longer if necessary.
- Eat regular meals and drink plenty of fluids as soon as you are able after surgery. Cold, soft food such as ice cream or yogurt may be the most comfortable for the first day.