

# Extraction

## Home Care Instructions

A tooth extraction is performed to remove a painful, infected or problematic tooth. Swelling, discomfort and restricted jaw opening are expected, but can be minimized by the following:

**Day 1:** Continue biting on the gauze for at least 30-60 minutes following your procedure, or until consistent bleeding has stopped. **Do NOT smoke, spit, rinse, suck (no straws), drink carbonated, hot or alcoholic beverages for at least 24 hours.** Passively empty your mouth when needed (do not rinse or spit forcefully). The goal is to establish a blood clot in the socket to prevent bleeding and a painful complication known as **DRY SOCKET**.

**Day 2-5:** You will most likely experience one or more of the following symptoms: Minor pain; swelling; bruising; limitation in opening or closing your mouth; pain in jaw or ear; sore throat. These symptoms may last longer, depending on individual factors. It is important to listen to your body and take it easy. **No smoking, heavy lifting, spitting or sucking.**

**Oral hygiene:** Brush gently. A gentle lukewarm salt water rinse (1 tsp salt + 1 cup water) can be used after at least 2 days. But again, do not spit; just let the fluid passively empty. The corners of your mouth may become cracked and dry – moisturize frequently.

**Discomfort:** Over-the-counter pain medication (Ibuprofen, Aleve, and Tylenol) may be taken as directed on the bottle to relieve discomfort. Do not use aspirin, as it may increase bleeding.

**Swelling:** Apply cold compresses to affected area at 10 minute intervals for the first 24-48 hours to minimize swelling. Any swelling that occurs usually begins to diminish within 72 hours; call the office if there is persistent swelling.

**Bleeding:** Some oozing of blood is normal for the first 12-24 hours. Put a hand towel on your pillow as some drooling can occur when you are numb. If you experience excessive bleeding, apply firm pressure with 1-2 folded gauze pads or damp plain tea bag on the affected area for 30-60 minutes and keep your head elevated. Call the office if the bleeding does not subside.

**Diet:** Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid carbonated and alcoholic beverages. A soft diet will be easiest: yogurt, milkshakes (**no straw**), soups, fish, pasta. Nothing too spicy is recommended. It is normal to have a little tenderness while chewing and difficulty opening wide.

**Stitches:** If you have received sutures, avoid touching them. Stitches will dissolve or come out on their own within 1-2 weeks.

**Prescriptions:** If you have been prescribed antibiotics, take them as directed until they are all gone, even if symptoms resolve. Some antibiotics can interfere with the effectiveness of birth control pills or other medications. If pain medication or a mouth rinse is prescribed take as directed. In case of any unusual disturbances, questions or any post surgical problems, please call the office.