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Post-Operative Instructions for Surgical Extractions

Please follow these instructions as closely as possible. They are designed to help you heal quickly, and comfortably, with minimal side effects. If you experience any complications from the procedure, please call our office. We have a 24 hour answering service that can always reach one of the doctors by pager, and we will return your call as soon as possible (usually within thirty minutes).

FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY:

- (1) Do not rinse your mouth.
- (2) Do not spit. *Tip: Use a tissue to wipe your mouth as needed, or swallow your saliva.*
- (3) Do not use a drinking straw. *Tip: Drink straight from the cup.*
- (4) Do not smoke. *Tip: Use a nicotine patch if you need it.*
- (5) Keep fingers and tongue away from the surgical area. Rinsing, spitting, the use of a drinking straw, smoking and poking can dislodge the blood clot that is forming, and will cause bleeding from the surgical area. In addition, smoking can increase the risk of an infection.

FOR BLEEDING:

1. Bite firmly for 30 to 45 minutes on the gauze placed in your mouth.
2. Remove the gauze after 30 to 45 minutes and replace it with a new one if you are still bleeding. *Tip: If the gauze is soaked, replace it earlier than 30 Minutes.*
3. Place the new gauze directly over the surgical area. *Tip: Firm pressure for another hour should stop the bleeding.*
4. If bleeding still continues after third attempt place a tea bag instead of gauze. *Tip: The tannic acid in the tea will help to form a clot and stop the bleeding.*
5. IF BLEEDING IS NOT CONTROLLED, CALL OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY. Some bleeding is normal and expected after a tooth extraction. It will usually subside quickly, and stop within a few hours after surgery. A little oozing is also normal and may persist for several hours or even overnight.

FOR SWELLING:

1. Use an ice pack over the cheek or face directly over the surgical area.
2. Keep it on 15-20 Min then off 10 Min and repeat until you go to sleep. Then repeat the cycle the next day. *Tip: The ice pack is reusable, just place in the freezer until cold before using it.*
3. Sleep with your head slightly elevated, above the heart. *Tip: This will keep the swelling down.*
4. On the third day, change to moist heat instead of ice packs. This will bring the swelling down quicker. Most patients will experience some swelling after surgery in the mouth. It might be mild or severe, and it is different for every patient. The swelling will increase during the first 24 to 48 hours before it will begin to subside. It might last from several days to a week.

EATING:

You might eat soft foods as soon as the anesthetic wears off. Try not to chew directly on the extraction side. You might resume a regular diet as soon as you feel up to. You will heal faster if you are well nourished and hydrated.

BRUSHING:

You may brush your teeth, avoiding the surgical area, either tonight or tomorrow morning. Be gentle and do not spit or rinse forcefully. *Tip: You may use an extra soft toothbrush during this period.*

RINSING:

Tomorrow you might start rinsing gently with some warm salty water every few hours. *Tip: Do not use mouth rinses containing alcohol for a few days.*

MEDICATIONS:

You were probably given one or more prescription medications. Take all medications with a full glass of water as directed on the bottle instructions -- Call our office if you experience severe nausea or diarrhea, or cannot swallow the pills.

1. Antibiotics: Take exactly as prescribed.
2. Pain Medication: Continue as necessary. Remember that narcotics can make you drowsy, so no driving, no operating machinery and no alcoholic beverages while you are taking medications.

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