

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS – Extraction(s)

Bleeding

Slight bleeding for a number of hours and days after a dental extraction is not unusual. Many patients think they are bleeding more than they actually are as the blood mixes with their saliva creating greater fluid volume. If heavy bleeding is still present after surgery then apply direct firm pressure to the surgical site with a moist wash cloth, gauze or tea bag. You should use your fingers or thumb to firmly press on the extraction site and apply continuous pressure to 10 – 15 minutes. When you remove the wash cloth, gauze or tea bag expect to see some blood that has soaked and absorbed into them. Direct pressure with a new wash cloth, gauze or tea bag may be repeated if necessary. Simply biting on the wash cloth, gauze or tea bag will probably not be adequate as the pressure is not focused on the source of bleeding. Holding ice water in your mouth for several minutes can also be used to control minor bleeding. If there is excessive bleeding or the bleeding continues after these measures call the office or treating doctor's cell phone for further instructions. You may need to return to the office for surgical care.

Pain

You will likely have pain in the surgical site for 2 to 5 days and possibly longer. It is better to take the pain medication on a regular time schedule to prevent it, rather than trying to catch up and relieve acute pain. See the postoperative instruction sheet on pain medications for more details on pain medications and pain management. If the pain medications are not adequately controlling your pain please call the office or the treating doctor's cell phone for further instructions. Do not drive, work, operate machinery or drink alcohol if you take the narcotic pain medication (hydrocodone). Limit your activity the first few days. Trying to do too much too fast increases your swelling which increases your discomfort.

Swelling

Swelling after oral surgery is expected. Swelling typically peaks on the 3rd day after surgery and then slowly decreases over time. To minimize initial swelling apply a cold pack to the face next to the operated area (cold pack from our office, zip-loc bag with crushed ice, or frozen peas). Keep the cold pack on your face over the surgical area for 10 minutes, then off for 10 minutes. Repeat this cycle the rest of the day. If you lay down use a pillow to elevate your head. As noted previously the more active you are the more swelling you can expect. You should not exercise for at least 1 week. Increasing your heart rate will cause more bleeding and swelling. Bruising may also occur after oral surgery. In some cases gravity will cause the bruising to extend into

the neck and chest. This is not common but normal. Applying a heating pad over the bruised area can accelerate resolution of the discoloration.

Dry Socket

A dry socket is not an infection. A dry socket occurs when the blood clot in the socket is dislodged or breaks down too early. Do not smoke for 2 weeks as this will increase your risk of a dry socket. Do not drink through a straw as the negative pressure can displace the blood clot in the socket. A dry socket usually occurs on the 3rd or 4th day after the extraction. If you experience prolonged or increased pain days after surgery please call our office to schedule a follow up visit. A dry socket dressing can be placed into the socket to relieve the discomfort. Most patients get immediate relief from this treatment. In some cases we may numb the area to break the pain cycle.

Diet

Increase your fluid intake following surgery and maintain a softer diet. Avoid carbonated beverages (soda) and hot drinks (coffee/tea) for one week as this can dissolve the blood clot. Stay hydrated with water or juices. Avoid the use of a straw for 2 weeks. It may be difficult to chew and open your mouth following surgery. You can use moist heat or a heating pad on the jaw muscles for comfort. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication (ibuprofen) can also help with jaw muscle soreness. A nutritious diet is important for you healing. Chop food into smaller pieces or use a blender to puree your food. A daily multivitamin is also advised. Thorne is a quality company and brand for supplements. Google search – “Thorne Multi-Vitamin Elite” for ordering and delivery. For bone healing we recommend taking a Vitamin D3 supplement. It should also contain K2. Bettervits (<https://bettervits.com>) is a highly rated Vitamin D supplement that also contains K2. Food supplements and meal replacement shakes with protein may also be considered. The following companies provide shakes that have been highly ranked by nutritionists – Kachava, Biome Secret, 310 Nutrition, and Huel Black Edition. Simply Google the company name to order the product. Avoid foods that can cause trauma to the surgical site such as popcorn, chips, granola, nuts and seeds.

Socket Bone Graft

A socket bone graft is placed within the extraction socket to act as a scaffold for new bone ingrowth. The socket bone graft helps maintain the bone for a future dental implant. The socket bone graft is a particulate material that has the consistency of sand. A collagen product is placed over the socket bone graft to protect it during the healing and keep the graft in place. Sutures are placed over the collagen dressing to secure it in place. Do not use a toothbrush around the grafted extraction site for 2 weeks to make sure you do not loosen the sutures or displace the protective

dressing. Also do not rinse vigorously or spit as you could wash out the protective dressing over the bone graft. Do not remove any sutures yourself. You may feel a depression in the gum where the tooth was extracted and this is normal.

NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:

If your pain or swelling increases after 3 to 5 days

If the sutures become loose or dislodged. Do not remove them yourself!

If you have any sign of a drug reaction or drug allergy (see medication instructions)

If you develop a fever (temperature > 100 degrees)

If you notice any bad taste or pus/drainage from the surgical site

If you notice acute redness of the skin adjacent to the surgical area

Pain from your surgery is not controlled by the medications

If you develop nausea that prevents drinking adequate fluids or maintaining a normal scheduled dietary intake

If you develop persisting diarrhea from the antibiotic

If you have any questions or concerns not discussed in these instructions we welcome any questions to help you understand your treatment.

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