

## **Post-Op Instructions After Extraction of Teeth**

### **1. PROTECTION OF THE BLOOD CLOT / SURGICAL SITE:**

Slight bleeding after a tooth extraction is normal and may last for several hours. Bite on folded gauze directly over the bleeding area and replace if bleeding is excessive. If there is no active bleeding then leave the gauze out. Lay in a semi-reclined position. Avoid spitting, bending over, sucking through a straw, and rinsing for a minimum of 24 hours. No strenuous activity or smoking for 48 hours. The formation of a blood clot is important for healing. Remove gauze if you are planning to eat, drink, or sleep.

### **2. RINSING / HYGIENE:**

Rinsing may dislodge the blood clot and interrupt the normal process of healing if started too early. Carefully follow these steps in order to prevent any delays in healing.

- **Day 1 (Day of surgery):** Do not rinse or brush your teeth, and do not spit.
- **Day 2 (Day after surgery):** Brush and floss your teeth as normal, 2 times per day, making sure to be gentle around the extraction sites (Do not brush directly on surgical site). Begin gently rinsing (vigorous rinsing may dislodge the blood clot and interrupt the normal process of healing, so be gentle). Rinse with the prescribed antibacterial rinse 2 times per day (e.g. once in the morning and once at night, after regular brushing and flossing). Use salt water rinses between doses of the antibacterial rinse (e.g. once finished eating).
- **Day 3:** Follow the same regiment as day 2, however begin rinsing more vigorously.
- **Day 4 - 30:** Follow the same regiment as day 2, however now rinse with full force. Continue rinsing and cleaning in this manner for 30 days. (note: you can stop the chlorhexidine on day 7).

**A clean mouth will heal faster.**

### **3. SWELLING / FEVER:**

A cool pack placed on the face will be beneficial to help control any swelling and bleeding. If extreme swelling or a temperature above 38.3°C occurs, contact the office.

### **4. PAIN:**

Some discomfort is normal following oral surgery. If pain medication is prescribed, take only as directed. Often it is beneficial to take the medication with, or after eating to help prevent nausea. *Do not drive while using narcotic pain medications.*

### **5. SMOKING / VAPING / ALCOHOL:**

Do not smoke, vape, or drink alcohol for 48 hours following oral surgery. This may cause the disruption of healthy blood clot formation and increase in complications

including dry socket, prolonged healing, wound breakdown and post-operative infections.

#### **6. DIET:**

No hot liquids, acidic foods or drinks for the first 24 hours. Eat something when you feel ready to. Cool liquids are best to start but avoid sucking through straws. Once the numbness from the local anesthetic starts to wear off, progress to a soft diet but avoid chewing in the area of the surgery. Avoid foods with small seeds (e.g. chia seeds, strawberries, etc.).

#### **7. SHARP BONY SOCKETS / DRY SOCKET:**

You may feel hard, sharp areas on/around the surgical site. This is the hard bony wall, which originally supported the tooth. "Dry Socket" is a term usually describing an area where the blood clot has dissolved leaving an exposed bony area which is painful. A "Dry Socket" will usually heal on its own. Pain control is the main concern when this happens. Try using an anti-inflammatory medicine like ibuprofen in addition to the narcotic pain medicine that was prescribed, unless advised otherwise.

#### **8. NAUSEA:**

Nausea is a normal side effect of narcotic pain medications. If you have severe nausea or vomiting you may need to stop the pain medications or to take an additional anti-nausea medication. It is better for you to take the extra anti-nausea medication when you feel the first signs of nausea than to wait until you vomit.