

# Post-Op Instructions Extractions

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**Follow these instructions carefully to ensure a successful and pain free healing.**

## **During the first 24 hours:**

**It is important that a blood clot forms** on the extraction site to stop bleeding, reduce pain and speed healing. To protect the clot and avoid the pain of dry socket:

- ❖ Bite on a gauze pad firmly for 30-60 minutes. Blood and saliva mix in the mouth and make it look like there is more bleeding than there really is. After 1 hour, replace with a clean gauze pad if bleeding is heavy. The site could slightly bleed for as long as 24hrs.
- ❖ Don't spit, and don't suck on candies or through a straw.
- ❖ Don't rinse your mouth, and don't brush or floss next to the site.
- ❖ Don't smoke or use tobacco. Avoid tobacco for at least 72 hours because it slows healing.
- ❖ Don't sneeze or cough, so have sinus or allergy medication on hand if necessary.
- ❖ Limit yourself to calm activities and elevate your head with pillows when you lie down to reduce bleeding.
- ❖ Don't drink hot, carbonated, or alcoholic drinks, avoid hot or spicy foods.

**To control discomfort**, take pain medication before the anesthetic has worn off or as recommended.

- \* To keep swelling to a minimum, use an ice bag over the area, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.
- \* When the numbness has worn off completely, drink lots of fluids and eat only soft nutritious foods, chewing on the opposite side of the extraction site.

## **After the first 24 hours:**

**Begin to eat normally** as soon as it's comfortable.

**Resume brushing and flossing**, but clean gently around the site for about a week.

**If antibiotics were prescribed**, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.

**Reduce soreness or swelling** by applying moist heat. Swelling usually starts to go down after 72 hours.

**Further reduce swelling** by rinsing your mouth very gently with warm salt water. Use about one teaspoon of salt per glass of warm water. Rinse two to three times a day for the week following the extraction.