

Tooth Extraction Post-Operative Instructions

Some or all of the following instructions may be helpful related to your tooth extraction(s).

DO NOT DISTURB THE AREA: For the next few days, and especially the first 24 hours, it is very important to allow your body to form a good blood clot and start the natural healing process. Swishing, sucking through a straw, and smoking can all dislodge the blood clot. These activities can all lead to a dry socket and should be avoided. Keep anything sharp from entering the wound (crunchy food, toothpicks, eating utensils, etc.). Be sure to chew on the opposite side of your mouth for 24 hours.

BLEEDING: When you leave the office, you will be biting on a gauze pad to control bleeding. Keep slight pressure on this gauze for at least 30 minutes. Do not change it during this time; it needs to remain undisturbed while a blood clot forms in the extraction socket. After 30 minutes, you may remove it. You may bite on another gauze pad or a tea bag for another 30 minutes if you feel it is still bleeding. Small amounts of blood in the saliva can make your saliva appear quite red. This is normal and may be noticed for the remainder of the day of the procedure.

SMOKING: Smoking should be stopped following surgery. Healing and success of the surgery will be substantially reduced by the cigarette smoke chemicals in your body. Additionally, the suction created when inhaling cigarettes can dislodge the clot. Smokers are at a much greater risk of developing a painful dry socket.

PAIN: Some discomfort is normal after surgery. To minimize pain, take two Extra Strength Tylenol (1g) and 3 Advil (600mg) every 6 hours until bedtime to maintain comfort. Take it before the anesthesia wears off. If prescription medication is prescribed, take it as instructed on the label. Do not exceed the dose on the label. Taking medication with food or milk may help reduce upset stomach. Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery when taking pain prescriptions. Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications.

NAUSEA: Nausea is most often caused by taking pain medications on an empty stomach. Reduce nausea by preceding each pain pill with soft food and taking the pill with a large glass of water.

SWELLING: Applying an ice bag or cold compress to the face over the operated area will help minimize swelling. Apply for 15 minutes, then remove for 15 minutes. Continue this for the first day.

BRUISING: Though uncommon, facial bruising may occur following an extraction. This can last anywhere from 3-10 days and though it may look alarming, it does not signify any complication from the procedure.

NUMBNESS: The local anesthetic will cause you to be numb for several hours after you leave the office. Be very careful not to bite, chew, pinch, or scratch the numb area. Sometimes the extraction causes residual numbness or tingling for six weeks or longer, though this is rare.

BRUSHING: Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours following surgery. After this time, you may brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery for 3 days.

RINSING: Avoid all rinsing or swishing for 48 hours after extraction. Rinsing can disturb the formation of a healing blood clot which is essential to proper healing. This could cause bleeding and risk of dry socket. After 48 hours, you may begin gentle rinsing with a saltwater solution (1/2 teaspoon salt + 8 ounces of warm water). Avoid commercial mouth rinses.

DIET: Eat soft foods for the first two days. Maintain a good, balanced diet. Return to normal regular meals as soon as you are able after the first two days. Drink plenty of water. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours.

ACTIVITY: After leaving the office, rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day. Keeping blood pressure lower will reduce bleeding and aid healing.

ANTIBIOTICS: If you were given an antibiotic prescription, take the prescription as directed until they are gone. Women: some antibiotics can reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills. Use alternate birth control methods for two months.

SINUS: If your sinus was involved in the procedure, you should avoid blowing your nose or playing a wind musical instrument for one week. Use of decongestant medications might be recommended.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS: You may need to return to the office to have your sutures removed, or just for a brief follow-up healing check.

Please call Dr. Reno if you experience any of the following:

- Uncontrollable pain;
- Excessive or severe bleeding;
- Marked fever;
- Excessive warm swelling occurring a few days after the procedures;
- Reactions to medications, especially rash, itching or breathing problems;

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE TO SPEAK WITH DR. RENO OR A STAFF MEMBER – WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HELP!