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Instructions for Postoperative Care Following Extraction

1. Try to keep your mouth at rest as much as possible for next 3 hours. You may have an occasional cold drink, but **do not** eat or rinse. Talk as little as possible.
2. As soon as you can, apply ice (in an ice bag or wrapped in a towel) to your face on the side where the extraction was performed. Keep the ice in place for 10 minutes and then take it off for about 15 minutes. Repeat this routine for the rest of today. This will help to keep swelling to a minimum. After 24 hours, **do not** use ice.
3. Have a soft diet today. A soft diet includes pasta, fish, eggs, cottage cheese, yogurt, soup, stew, ice cream, jello, tuna, and chicken salad. Avoid using a straw, bagels, steak, nuts, popcorn, and pretzels.
4. After 24 hours, you may have a completely normal diet, but chew **on the side opposite** the surgical area.
5. Starting tomorrow, use warm salt water as a mouth soak. Mix 1 teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water. Take a mouthful and hold it over the operated area, bringing the solution to the tissues. Keep it there until it cools, empty out and repeat mouthful after mouthful until you have used it all. You may do this as often as you wish **unless** there is some bleeding.
6. If there is some oozing of blood, **do not rinse**. Take a piece of gauze and gently wipe away any half-formed blood clots. Then place a piece of gauze over the area which seems to be bleeding and keep it there with moderate pressure for about 15 to 20 minutes. Repeat a second time. This should stop the bleeding. Do not rinse for at least 3 hours. If bleeding continues, call our office.
7. If there is some soreness or aching, you may use Tylenol, Advil, or Aleve, or the prescribed medication. **Do not** use these medications if they are medically contraindicated.
8. Brush your teeth normally and carry out your regular home care routine **except** in the area where the extraction was performed.
9. Elevate your head on an extra pillow. Use an old pillowcase or towel to protect your linens.
10. If swelling occurs, it will be greater the day after tomorrow than tomorrow. The swelling usually reaches its peak about 48 hours after surgery and then it will gradually diminish.
11. If you have any questions, or if there is any problem not covered in these instructions, please do not hesitate to call our office. Our phones are always attended.