

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING TOOTH EXTRACTION

Care of the mouth after surgery has an important effect on healing. Swelling, discomfort, and restricted jaw function are expected, and so there is no need to be alarmed. These may be minimized by the following instructions. Please read them carefully.

1. **Bleeding**- Remove the gauze pack upon arriving home. Slight bleeding is expected and is likely for several hours. If oozing continues, place another clean, folded gauze pad or a moistened tea bag over the bleeding area and bite firmly for 30 minutes with constant pressure. If bleeding persists, please call. **NO SPITTING, NO STRAWS, NO SMOKING, AND AVOID ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES for the first 48 hours.**
2. **Swelling**- To help control swelling, an ice pack should be placed on the cheek for 15 minutes on, 10 minutes off, and then repeated for 3-4 hours, the day of surgery only. If swelling persists after twenty four-hours, please call as soon as possible.
3. **Pain**- Take all medication as directed. Do not take medication on an empty stomach.
4. **Antibiotics**- If you have been given a prescription for antibiotics, you **must take all** the tablets as prescribed. **If you develop a rash, discontinue all medication and call me.**
5. **Diet**- It is important that you continue to receive proper nourishment. Unless otherwise instructed, it is usually more comfortable to limit the diet to **cold, soft foods** during the first 12-24 hours. It is very important to maintain your normal fluid intake. Resume a balanced, high protein diet as soon as it is comfortable. **DO NOT MISS MEALS OR GET DEHYDRATED.**
6. **Oral hygiene**- Beginning the day after your appointment, gently rinse your mouth with warm salt water after each meal and at bedtime. Continue to rinse for 1 week (1 teaspoon of salt/8 ounces of water). The teeth may be brushed but avoid the surgical site.
7. If bleeding persists or any unusual condition appears, do not hesitate to call our office at 301-652-8886. If calling after normal business hours, I can be reached on 301-385-9322.