

Affiliates in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

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Post-op Extractions

- Please **avoid rinsing** today. Tomorrow, begin to rinse with warm salt water (1/2 t. salt to 1 cup water) every 2 to 3 hours for several days, then after meals and at bedtime for the next 2 weeks. You may begin brushing your teeth tomorrow.
- Please note that **gradual increase in pain from days 3-5 is not uncommon**.
- Keep your **head elevated** at all times for the first 5-7 days following surgery. This will help decrease swelling and pain.
- Our office uses **stitches** that are designed to fall out on their own from 3-5 days after surgery (certain types may last a few weeks or longer, however).
- **DO NOT SMOKE**. Smoking in any amount in the first few weeks can cause a dry socket, and will dramatically delay wound healing.
- You may eat or drink what you feel up to once the local anesthetic has worn off. Avoid very hot foods or liquids for 24 hours. Soft foods like eggs, pastas, warm soups and yogurt are recommended.
- The surgical site may continue to bleed slightly for a day or two. This is no cause for alarm. If heavy bleeding occurs, fold a piece of gauze or use a wet or dry tea bag, and place over the bleeding area. Maintain firm pressure for 30 minutes. Avoid frequent pack changes, rinsing, and spitting or physical exertion until the bleeding has ceased.
- **DO NOT** drink alcoholic beverages, drive, or operate machinery for 12 hours following general anesthesia. **DO NOT** combine pain medication with alcohol.
- Some discomfort is to be expected and may be rather uncomfortable for the first few hours or days. Please take the prescribed medication **with food** as directed and allow 45 minutes for the medication to work. Therefore, take the medication before the pain becomes too severe. Take Ibuprofen (Advil) 800mg every 6 hours for minor discomfort or in between doses of pain medication to increase effectiveness.
- **Swelling is to be expected and usually reaches its maximum during the first three days**. Apply ice to the side of the face 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off as often as possible for the first 48 hours. Frozen vegetable bags wrapped in dishtowels work nicely as they contour to the jaw. Change to heat (a heating pad or hot water bottle) 48 hours after surgery. Continue to use heat until the swelling has receded.
- **Bruising** may occur, especially along the jaw line. This is not unexpected and should disappear soon.
- Keep lips moist with Chap Stick or Vaseline to prevent chapping.
- **Tightness of the jaw muscles** may make it difficult for you to open your mouth for up **two weeks**.
- If you have been prescribed an antibiotic and are currently taking oral contraceptives you should use an alternate method of birth control for the remainder of this cycle. If any unusual symptoms occur or if you have any questions concerning your progress, do not hesitate to call the office during business hours (Mon. – Fri. 8am– 5pm) as we will have access to your records at that time. If an **emergency** arises we may be reached 24 hours a day by calling (719)597-4060. Please note that pain medication cannot be refilled outside of office hours.