

# After Tooth Removal: Instructions

After tooth extraction, it's important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. That's why we ask you to bite on a gauze pad for at least 45 minutes continuously for applying pressure after extraction.

If the bleeding or oozing persists, insert another gauze pad and bite firmly for another 30 minutes. You may have to do this several times. As bleeding slows down you don't have to change the gauze as often. If you run out of gauze supplies that we provided, use a tea bag instead. Place the tea bag in the hot water to sterilize it, then remove it and wait until it is cold. Place the tea bag over the extraction site and gently bite.

Keep fingers and other object away from the extraction site.

Do not rinse out your mouth or spit today as that may cause more bleeding (7-8 hours). Swallow your saliva or blood if you have to.

Keep ice pack, frozen gel-pack, or a frozen bag of peas on your face close to the extraction site intermittently. Place it for 20 minutes, and then remove it for 20 minutes, this way the blood supply to the area will not be cut out.

Avoid drinking any Carbonated beverages /Sodas or hot beverages, and hot food (coffee, tea, soup) at least until the bleeding completely stopped. Let the beverage/food cool before eating today. On the day of surgery most people find cool soft foods (ice cream, yogurt) soothing.

Cold or lukewarm liquids may be taken for the first 4-6 hours. After this any soft food is permissible. Avoid food with sharp edges such as chips, crackers, and toast for the next week.

Avoid smoking for at least for first 5 days after surgery. Be aware that smoking 5 days after surgery also may increase the chance of infection and bleeding.

Drink plenty of fluids. (Do not use a straw - this creates suction in the mouth that could cause complications).

Start tomorrow: Rinse your mouth frequently with a solution of 1/2 teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water. Continue to rinse for a few days.

An irrigation syringe will be given to all patients to irrigate the extraction site thoroughly. Place the plastic tip of the syringe gently at the extraction site and press the plunger to irrigate the wound free of food debris and bacteria.

Some patients will be given a prescription-strength mouth rinse. It should be use twice a day in addition to the saltwater.

It is normal for the saliva to be streaked with blood for a day. If frank bleeding is present, fold sterile gauze into a firm wad or use a lukewarm tea bag and place it directly on the bleeding area. Maintain firm pressure by biting for 20 minutes. The tannic acid in tea has a clotting effect.

Swelling and discoloration is to be expected in certain areas, usually reaching its maximum two days after surgery. It will disappear gradually and is no cause for concern. Intermittent use of ice pads can reduce the chance of swelling.

If you have been given a prescription for antibiotics you will need to complete the entire course of medication that has been prescribed to minimize the chance for Infection.

Start pain relievers BEFORE your anesthesia wears off. Unless otherwise specified, start with Ibuprofen 400 mg (two 200 mg tablets) every 4-6 hours for adults. Follow the appropriate instructions, if a prescription strength pain reliever is given.

Be sure to take the prescribed Antibiotics as directed to help prevent infection.

Avoid drinking alcohol or driving if taking prescription pain medication.

The next day after extraction begin gentle rinsing with the prescription rinse, if given, two times per day (after breakfast, and before bedtime) as directed on the bottle. You also should continue to rinse with warm salt water (1/2 tsp. salt to 8oz. glass of water) between the prescription rinse for the next two weeks.

Avoid vigorous exercise and excessive talking for the next 3 days.

If stitches are used, most may not dissolve on their own or must be removed at your follow-up appointment. Never pull at loose stitches or attempt to remove them yourself.

Most post-surgical pain is improving by the third day. If pain or swelling is increasing on the fourth day or later after the surgery, call the office [\(505\) 585-5157](tel:5055855157) to speak with our staff or with our office. You may have to come in for a follow up visit ASAP.