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## **HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING ORAL SURGERY EXTRACTIONS**

Refrain from eating for at least 2 hours and until the anesthesia has worn off.

### **Bleeding Control**

1. After an extraction, keep a moist gauze pack in place over the extraction site with constant, firm biting pressure for 15 - 30 minutes to prevent excessive bleeding and promote clot formation.
2. Avoid forceful rinsing or activities that could apply a suction action to the blood clot such as smoking or using a straw.
3. Should slight bleeding continue, discard the old compress and place a piece of fresh moist gauze over the bleeding area and apply firm biting pressure for 20 minutes. You may use a moistened tea bag as an alternative. This may have to be repeated 3 or 4 times.
4. It is also helpful to lie down, with the head raised on several pillows, and remain calm. Apply an ice bag or cold compress to the cheek on that side. Do not take tea, coffee, or other stimulants.
5. Some oozing and discoloration of saliva is normal.
6. If these measures do not succeed, call our office.

## **Oral Hygiene**

Do not use a mouth rinse for 12 hours. After 12 hours, a warm salt water mouth rinse (1/2 teaspoonful to a glass of warm water) will aid in the healing. You can do this every 3-4 hours a day especially after meals. Continue regular brushing and flossing being extra gentle near the extraction site.

## **Swelling**

Following an extraction, some swelling or bruising may occur. A cold, moist compress or an ice bag applied to the cheek (10 minutes on and 5 minutes off for the first day) will keep swelling to a minimum. Bruising may first appear as black and blue marks, but after the second or third day it may discolor the face yellow, black, or blue. This will gradually disappear in 7 – 10 days.

## **Medications**

A non-aspirin analgesic may be recommended to relieve your discomfort along with an antibiotic if there is an infection. Stronger medications may be prescribed if needed. Be sure to use all medications as directed.

## **Diet**

A liquid or soft diet, such as heavy soup, milk toast, soft boiled eggs, or well-cooked cereal is recommended the first day. Avoid alcoholic, carbonated, or hot beverages. Chewing should be done away from the extraction site. As healing progresses over the next few days, follow your natural inclination as to diet, but for your comfort consider taking soft foods. Drink plenty of fluids. Well balanced meals are important to your recovery.

## **Sutures**

Occasionally stitches, or sutures, are placed in the gums, especially if more than one tooth is removed. Although you may feel them with your tongue, it is best to leave them alone. Gut sutures will dissolve in 2-5 days. If silk or synthetic suture material is used, they will be removed by the dentist in 5-7 days.

## **Post-operative Visits**

An appointment following your oral surgical procedure will be set up if needed. You should call our office if you are experiencing prolonged bleeding, increasing soreness or swelling which does not respond to the medication you are taking, or any other problems.