



INFORMATION REGARDING ORAL SURGERY

Anaesthetics

The length of time you experience numbness varies on the type of anaesthetic you have received. While your mouth is numb be careful not to bite your cheek, lip or tongue. The numbness should subside within a few hours but may last 5-6 hours.

Healing

A gauze pack has been placed on the extraction site to limit bleeding and allow clotting to take place. This gauze should be left in place for about 20 minutes and then disposed of thoughtfully. Do not chew on the pack. There is no need to replace the pack unless heavy bleeding occurs. Expect a bit of ooze.

AT HOME

Bleeding

If there is bleeding or heavy oozing after the pack is removed follow this procedure:

- Fold a piece clean gauze into a pad thick enough to bite on. Dampen the pad and place it on the extraction site. A cotton handkerchief knotted in one corner is a good alternative.
- Apply moderate pressure by closing the teeth firmly on this pad. Maintain this pressure for about 30 minutes. If the pad becomes soaked replace as necessary.
- Do not suck on the extraction site. Minimise smoking, exercise and alcohol for 5 days.
- If heavy bleeding occurs, please contact us. (Remember that a lot of saliva and a little blood can look like a lot of bleeding)

The Blood Clot

- After an extraction, a blood clot forms in the tooth socket. This clot is an important part of normal healing and you should avoid activities that may disturb it.
- Do not smoke, rinse your mouth vigorously or drink through a straw for 24 hours. These activities create suction in the mouth which could dislodge the clot and delay healing.
- Do not clean teeth next to the healing socket for the rest of the day. You should, however, brush and floss your other teeth thoroughly. GENTLY rinse afterward
- Limit strenuous activity for 24 hours after the extraction. Heavy exercise increases the blood pressure which can cause bleeding and affect the clot.

Swelling, Pain and limited mouth opening

After a tooth is removed, you may have some discomfort and swelling for the next few days. Swelling and pain can be reduced by applying a cold compress to the face on and off for several hours as soon as possible after the extraction. You can use an ice bag or a packet of frozen vegetables wrapped in a tea towel. Trismus (limited ability to open the mouth) is common in the and can last 2 weeks.

If your extraction was difficult and required surgery, you can expect significant swelling and some bruising of the surrounding skin. This can last up to 2 weeks.

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General and Cosmetic Dentistry



Diet

After the extraction, drink lots of liquid. You can begin eating soft, nutritious foods after about 2 hours. Avoid alcohol and hot liquids as they can promote bleeding. Begin eating solid foods the next day or when you feel comfortable. For about 2 days try to chew on the opposite side to the extraction.

Rinsing

Six hours or so after the extraction (unless still bleeding) begin **very gentle** mouth rinsing with **warm** salt water (a teaspoon of salt in an average size glass of warm water) or Difflam C every 2 hours. Avoid vigorous rinsing because you may disturb the blood clot. Discontinue the Difflam C after about 10 days as it may cause superficial brown staining (easily removed) if used for extended periods.

Oral Hygiene

It is important to continue brushing and flossing after extractions. The tongue should be brushed to help eliminate the bad breath and unpleasant taste that is common after an extraction. On the day of the extraction, avoid cleaning too close to the extraction site.

Stitches

If you had stitches placed they will fall out in about one week. You will be advised if non-dissolving stitches are used.

Dry socket

Occasionally, an extraction site becomes extremely painful 3 or 4 days after the extraction. This is usually accompanied by a bad taste and odour but almost no pus. If you develop these symptoms, it is probably a 'dry socket'. Although painful it is not a serious problem but we need to place medication in the socket. Antibiotics may be indicated.

The use of a chlorhexidine containing mouth rinse (e.g. Difflam C, Savacol) after an extraction reduces the incidence of 'dry socket'.

Immediate Dentures

If new or remodelled dentures have been inserted directly over an extraction site(s) do not remove them for 24 hours. After this time remove them carefully and wash in warm soapy water. Rinse the mouth as described above and replace dentures. Continue rinsing every 2 hours. Food should be soft for several days or until chewing is comfortable. Do not leave the dentures out for any extended period during the next 5 days. After this it is generally preferable to leave the dentures out whilst sleeping unless otherwise instructed.

Analgesics

Good analgesics for post-operative include ibuprofen, paracetamol and codeine. These are also available in excellent combination preparations such as Nuromol™ or Nurofen Plus™. **Do not take aspirin or anything you are allergic to and seek advice from us or a Pharmacist or Medical Practitioner if you are not sure.**

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