



Post-Operative Instructions: Tooth Extractions

Protect the Blood Clot

After your tooth extraction, a blood clot forms in the socket. This clot is essential for proper healing.

For the first 48 hours:

- Do not rinse your mouth forcefully
- Do not use straws
- Do not smoke or vape
- Do not touch the extraction site

Bleeding & Swelling

Bleeding:

- Bite on gauze for 30–60 minutes
- Replace gauze as needed
- Keep your head elevated
- Avoid lying flat
- Limit activity for 2–3 days

Swelling:

- Apply ice packs (20 minutes on / 20 minutes off) for the first 24 hours
- Swelling peaks in 2–3 days and then gradually improves



Pain & Medications

- Some discomfort is normal after anesthesia wears off
- Take medications exactly as prescribed
- Do not exceed recommended dosage
- Do not drive or operate machinery while taking pain medication

Infection Prevention

- Take all prescribed antibiotics until finished
- Maintain good oral hygiene
- Avoid smoking, as it increases risk of complications
- Birth control pills may be less effective while taking antibiotics

Sutures (Stitches)

- Dissolvable stitches typically fall out in 1–7 days
- Non-dissolvable stitches may be removed in 7–10 days

Diet & Oral Care

Diet:

- Start with liquids, then soft foods (yogurt, applesauce, mashed potatoes, eggs)
- Avoid hard, crunchy, or seeded foods for at least 2 weeks

Oral Care:

- Do not rinse for the first 24 hours
- After 24 hours, rinse gently with warm salt water 2–3 times daily
- Brush teeth gently, avoiding the surgical area



Activity & Recovery

- Rest for the first 24 hours
- Avoid exercise or heavy lifting for 2–3 days
- Avoid smoking and alcohol
- Keep your head elevated while resting

After Sedation (If Applicable)

For 24 hours after sedation:

- Do not drive or operate machinery
- Do not drink alcohol
- Avoid physical activity

Warning Signs – Call Immediately

- Bleeding that does not stop after 60 minutes of pressure
- Severe pain not controlled by medication
- Swelling worsening after 3 days
- Fever over 101°F
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Foul taste or discharge

Contact Us

Phone: (203) 327-7498

Final Note

Following these instructions carefully will help ensure a smooth recovery and prevent complications. If you have any concerns, please contact our office.