

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORAL SURGERY

The following steps are necessary for achieving proper healing with minimal complications. The first 24 hours of self-care instructions must be followed closely or delayed healing can be expected.

Moist gauze packs are to be left in place for 30 minutes. Bite on the gauze with the slight pressure. Remove it briefly only to eat or drink, then replace it for the remaining period of time. Rest the remainder of the day, refraining from any smoking and physical activity. This will allow for good clot formation.

Ice should be used for 20 minutes to minimize swelling and should cover a large area. The ice bag should be placed within a towel making sure that the part next to your face is slightly moist. An additional towel should be used to secure the ice bag to your face. Aspirin, Tylenol, or Advil should be a sufficient pain remedy for most extractions. However, do not take any of these if an allergy exists.

Local anesthesia usually lasts two hours; therefore take one of these one hour before the anesthesia wears off. If you have been given a prescription, please do not drink alcoholic beverages, operate motor vehicles or perform duties that require mental concentrations for 8 hours after taking the medication. Be aware that pain medications does not totally eliminate discomfort but rather allows you to tolerate the discomfort. Do not rinse vigorously for 24 hours.

You must eat to feel healthy. Suggestions are milkshakes, liquids, lukewarm soup, baby food, cold drinks, ice cream, food that you can chew lightly or regular meals if you are sufficiently comfortable to eat.

After 24 hours, brush your teeth and rinse your mouth well, especially after meals. Keep your mouth clean. Even if sutures are present, brush in that area. You will not dislodge the sutures or injure the surgery area while brushing.

Slight oozing of blood is to be expected for the first 24 hours. Swelling and trismus (difficulty and stiffness when opening the mouth) are to be expected. The more difficult the extraction, the greater the swelling and stiffness. Paresthesia (numbness of the lower lip) is always possible with the removal of lower molar teeth, but please call if this occurs. Maxillary (upper) sinus exposure seldom occurs but it is always possible with the removal of upper molar teeth. Again, please call the office if this problem arises. A dry socket may develop 2 to 5 days after extractions, please contact the office if you feel that this is occurring.

AFTER THE FIRST 48 HOURS the following will reduce swelling and promote healing:

Continue to keep the mouth clean with a toothbrush and mouthwash.

Use hot water mouth rinses. Use 2 tablespoons of salt with one quart of water. Heat it to the same temperature as you would coffee. Place ½ cup of the solution into your mouth and place it over the area until the solution cools. Repeat until the quart is gone, repeating this process 4-6 times a day. It takes about 5-14 days for the swollen area to return to normalcy.