



EXTRACTION POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND CALL OUR OFFICE WITH ANY QUESTIONS PRIOR TO SURGERY

Sometimes the after-effects of extractions are quite minimal, so not all of the instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt, follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification. **Our phone number is (541) 654-5482.**

EXERCISE CARE: Do **NOT** disturb the surgical area. Continue to bite down firmly on the gauze covering the surgical site for the first 45 minutes following surgery. Do **NOT** rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Limit activity the day of surgery. Keep head elevated by relaxing in a chair or using extra pillows while in bed or on the couch. Light physical work is okay the following day after surgery. Do not engage in any strenuous activities for 7-14 days after surgery. Your body should spend most of its energy healing.

DIET: Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Avoid extremely hot foods. Do not use a straw for the first few days following surgery. It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.) It is best to avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas. Over the next several days you may gradually progress to solid foods. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

MOUTH RINSES: Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and gently rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat as often as you like, but at least two or three times daily. Do not spit liquids out in a forceful manner.

BRUSHING: Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

SMOKING/CHEWING: The use of tobacco products greatly reduces the success of your recovery and can lead to dry socket.

HEALING: Normal healing after tooth extraction should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually some swelling. On the third day you should be more comfortable and, although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual, steady improvement. If you do not see continued improvement, please call our office. If you are given a plastic irrigating syringe, **DO NOT use it for the first five days.** Thereafter, use it daily according to the instructions until you are certain the tooth socket has closed completely and that there is no chance of any food particles lodging in the socket.

BONE GRAFT: If a bone graft was placed it is very important to avoid compromising the sutures and ultimately the graft by disturbing the area with food or a tooth brush. Please avoid brushing the area where a bone graft was performed for 2 weeks. During that time dab the teeth in the treated area sparingly with a cotton swab dipped in salt water up to four times a day. Avoid dabbing the gums. Repeat as often as you like, but at least twice daily. We make sure to add extra bone so do not be disturbed if you notice small grains of graft that escape the graft site. Please call our office if you feel that the amount of graft particles is significant.

SIDE EFFECTS

Bleeding Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. If active bleeding persists after the gauze is removed, place new gauze and apply pressure over the surgical site for an additional 30 minutes. The gauze may then be changed as necessary (typically every 30 to 45 minutes). It is best to moisten the gauze with tap water and loosely fluff for more comfortable positioning. If you experience heavy bleeding it usually means that the gauze are not exerting pressure on the surgical areas; Try repositioning the gauze. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a tea bag* (soaked in very hot water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) for 30 minutes. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office. *The tea bag must include tannic acid as an ingredient.*

Swelling: Swelling is often associated with extractions. In the first 24 hours swelling can be minimized by wrapping a cold pack, ice bag or bag of frozen peas in a towel and applying firmly to the cheek. This should be applied for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed. Starting the day after surgery you may apply warm compresses to the skin over the areas of swelling (hot water bottle, hot moist towels, or heating pad) for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. ***If you can take Ibuprofen; take 600 mg every 6 hrs for 3-4 days.**

Pain: Unfortunately most extractions are accompanied by some degree of discomfort. **Taking Ibuprofen regularly as directed above is the best way to control pain.** You may be given a **prescription for pain medication that can be taken in addition to the Ibuprofen.** Start the pain medication before the anesthetic has worn off to manage possible discomfort. Some patients find that stronger pain medicine causes nausea, but if you precede each pain pill with a small amount of food, chances for nausea will be reduced. The effects of pain medications vary widely among individuals. Some patients may even require two of the pain pills at one time. If you find you are taking large amounts of pain medicine at frequent intervals, please call our office. If you anticipate needing more prescription medication for the weekend, you must call for a refill during weekday business hours.

Nausea: Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food, and taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications, but call us if you do not feel better. Classic Coca Cola may help with nausea.

Sharp Edges: If you feel something hard or sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling the bony walls which once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call our office. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern. If you are having an after-hours emergency please call **Dr. Dow's cell phone at (541) 937-5417**. Telephone calls for prescription renewals are ONLY accepted during the office hours if 7a-4p.

Your Next visit:

Although it varies, we try to place dissolvable stitches so that patients do not have to plan on being seen for a postoperative appointment. For more involved surgeries Dr. Dow may request that you be seen. If you are concerned about your healing please call to speak with a surgical assistant. If needed the surgical assistant can schedule you for a short appointment to observe healing and answer any questions.

If you don't have additional planned treatment and are not planning on replacing the tooth with an implant then you might be all done. If that is the case, don't forget you can always call and THANK YOU!

If you are planning on returning for an implant, your next step in the process will be to return between 3 and 6 months for an implant evaluation where we evaluate your healing and determine if you are ready and able to proceed with a dental implant placement.

