

## Dental Extraction Post-Operative Instructions

The removal of a tooth can be simple or complicated, depending on the circumstances of your case. Post-operative care is very important—please read all the instructions below carefully and call the office at 212-764-0440 if anything is unclear to you. Following these instructions can minimize complications such as pain, infection and swelling.

### Immediately Following Surgery

Bite on a gauze pad placed over the surgical site for **1 hour**. After this time, the gauze should be discarded and replaced by another gauze pad if the bleeding has not stopped.

**NO SMOKING** under any circumstances for 48 hours. Smoking slows healing and may cause a very painful complication called a 'dry socket'.

**Avoid** vigorous mouth rinsing and do not touch the wound area following surgery.

Ice packs may be used to minimize swelling in the area around the surgery.

Take any prescribed medications as soon as possible so that they become effective before the dental anesthesia has worn off.

If no pain medication has been prescribed, you may choose to take up to 2 regular strength Tylenol OR 2-4 regular strength Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin/Alleve) every 4-8 hours to reduce discomfort. Do not exceed these doses.

Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable.

### Diet

Drink plenty of fluids beginning on the day of surgery. **DO NOT use a straw.**

Avoid hot liquids or foods while you are numb. Soft foods and liquids can be eaten on the day of surgery.

Avoid chewing sharp or hard objects at the surgical site for a few days. Otherwise, return to a normal diet as soon as possible.

### Oral Hygiene

It is important to keep the surgical area clean to allow for proper healing.

You can brush your teeth the night of surgery but rinse **gently**.

Beginning the day after surgery, rinse 5-6 times a day, ideally with salt water (1 cup of warm water mixed with 1 teaspoon of salt), though plain water is acceptable.

### **Bleeding**

Bleeding is normal following surgery. Slight bleeding or oozing, leading to redness in the saliva is common. Bleeding should subside within 6-8 hours.

Excessive bleeding may be controlled by placing a new gauze pad over the surgical area and biting down firmly for 60 minutes.

If bleeding continues, bite on a moist tea bag (that has cooled) for 30 minutes. Maintain constant pressure, do not chew or talk, and sit upright.

If bleeding does not subside in 6-8 hours, call the office at 212-764-0440 for further instructions.

### **Swelling**

Simple tooth extractions generally do not produce much swelling, so an ice pack may not even be needed. However, if there was a fair amount of cheek retraction during the surgery, an ice pack may be used to reduce potential swelling.

Swelling does not appear until the day after surgery and reaches its maximum 2-3 days post-operatively.

Ice packs should be applied 20 minutes on/20 minutes off for the afternoon and evening immediately following surgery if swelling is suspected.

**Bright red, hard, hot swelling that does not indent with the finger suggests infection.**

These symptoms would develop approximately 3-4 days after surgery. If this should occur, call our office at 212-764-0440.

### **Temperature**

It is normal to run a low-grade temperature (90-100°F) for 7-10 days following oral surgery.

Two Tylenol OR 2-4 Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin/Alleve) every 4-8 hours will help moderate temperature. Do not exceed these doses.

A temperature of more than 101°F for several days after surgery, especially if accompanied by a hard swelling and increased pain, is usually indicative of an infection. Call the office at 212-764-0440 for instructions if this should occur.