



## Instructions after Extractions

The extraction of teeth is a surgical procedure. Carefully following these instructions can minimize discomfort and reduce the chance complications. If at any time you have questions, call the office: 218.751.4216.

**Women: Some antibiotics may reduce the effectiveness of your birth control pills. Please check with your pharmacist concerning the medications that you are taking.**

### **The Day of Surgery:**

- Keep the gauze pad placed over the surgical area with firm biting pressure for a half hour. After this time, the gauze pad should be removed and discarded. You may repeat this until the bleeding is reduced.
- Avoid rinsing or touching the extraction site following surgery. This may dislodge the blood clot and cause the area to bleed.
- If you have been given a prescription for pain medications, start taking the medications as soon as you begin to feel discomfort.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and slowly resume normal activity when you feel comfortable.
- Place ice packs to the sides of your face where surgery was performed. Refer to the section on swelling for an explanation.

### **Bleeding**

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. **Excessive bleeding** may be controlled by first rinsing or wiping any old clots from your mouth, then placing a gauze pad over the area and **biting firmly for thirty minutes**. Repeat if necessary. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for thirty minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels. To minimize further bleeding, sit semi-reclined rather than lying down and avoid exercise. If bleeding does not subside, call for further instructions.

### **Swelling**

The swelling that is normally expected is usually proportional to the surgery involved. Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes and sides of the face is not uncommon. This is the body's normal reaction to surgery. The swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and may not reach its maximum until 2-3 days post-operatively. However, the swelling can be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Two baggies filled with ice, or ice packs placed inside a thin wash cloth should be applied to the sides of the face where surgery was performed. The ice packs should be used on for 20 minutes off for 20 minutes while you are awake. After 36 hours, ice has no beneficial effect. If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. This is a normal reaction to surgery. Thirty-six hours following surgery the application of moist heat to the sides of the face is beneficial in reducing the size of the swelling

### **Pain**

- For moderate pain, two 200 mg tablets of Ibuprofen, (Motrin or Advil) may be taken immediately followed by one 200 mg tablet every 2 hours with something to eat, as needed OR 600-800 mg every 6 to 8 hours. For patients who are allergic to Aspirin, or cannot take Ibuprofen, one or two tablets of regular or Extra Strength Tylenol may be taken every four to six hours instead.
- For severe pain take the tablets prescribed for pain as directed. The prescribed pain medicine may make you groggy and will slow down your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around heavy machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages.

## **Diet**

- Do not use straws. The sucking motion can cause more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot. Drink from a glass. You may eat anything soft by chewing away from the surgical sites. Nourishment should be taken regularly. High calorie, high protein intake is very important during the healing phase. Your solid food intake will be limited for the first few days. You should compensate for this by increasing your fluid intake. At least 5-6 glasses of liquid should be taken daily. Try not to miss a single meal. You will feel better, have more strength, less discomfort and heal faster if you continue to eat.
- **Caution:** If you suddenly sit up or stand from a lying position you may become dizzy. Therefore, immediately following surgery, if you are laying down, make sure you sit for one minute or so before standing.
- Keep your mouth clean
- No rinsing of any kind should be done for the first 24 hours following surgery. You can brush your teeth the night of surgery but rinse gently. The day after surgery you should begin verygentle rinsing at least 5-6 times a day, especially after eating, with a cup of warm water mixed with a teaspoon of salt.

## **Bruising**

In some cases, discoloration of the skin (Bruising) may occur. The development of black, blue, green, or yellow discoloration is due to blood spreading beneath the tissues. This is a normal post-operative occurrence, which may occur 2-3 days post-operatively. Moist heat applied to the area may speed up the removal of the discoloration.

## **Antibiotics**

If you have been placed on antibiotics take the tablets or liquid as directed. Antibiotics will be given to help prevent infection. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction. Call the office if you have any questions.

## **Other Complications**

- If numbness of the lip, chin, or tongue occurs there is no cause for alarm. As stated before surgery, this is usually temporary in nature. Be careful not to bite your tongue or lip while it is numb.
- Slight elevation of temperature immediately following surgery is not uncommon. If the temperature persists, notify the office. Tylenol or ibuprofen should be taken to reduce the fever.
- Occasionally, patients may feel hard projections in the mouth with their tongue. They are not roots, they are the bony walls which supported the tooth. These projections usually smooth out spontaneously. If not, they can be removed by your Doctor.
- If the corners of your mouth are stretched, they may dry out and crack. Your lips should be kept moist with an ointment such as vaseline.
- Sore throats and pain when swallowing are not uncommon. The muscles get swollen. The normal act of swallowing can then become painful. This will subside in 2-3 days.
- Stiffness (Trismus) of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening your mouth for a few days following surgery. This is normal post-operative event which will resolve in time.
- Sutures may have been placed in the area of surgery to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. Sometimes they become dislodged; this is no cause for alarm. Just remove the suture from your mouth and discard it. The sutures will either be self dissolving or removed approximately one week after surgery. The removal of sutures requires no anesthesia or needles. It takes only a minute or so, and there is no discomfort associated with this procedure.
- There will be a depression where the tooth was removed. The depression will gradually, over the next 6weeks, fill in with tissue. In the mean time, the area should be kept clean with salt water rinses, especially after meals.
- Gentle tooth brushing is okay, just one tooth away from the extraction sites.

## **Dry Socket**

A dry socket is caused when the blood clot gets dislodged prematurely from the tooth socket. Symptoms of pain at the surgical site radiating to the ear may occur 2-3 days following surgery. Please call the office if you are concerned.