

After a Tooth Extraction – Caring for Your Mouth

When you've had a tooth extracted (removed) you need to take care of your mouth. Doing certain things even on the first day, may help you feel better and heal faster. Please read these instructions and follow them carefully for a faster, easier recovery.

Call the dentist if:

Pain becomes more severe than the day after your extraction
Bleeding becomes hard to control
Swelling around the extraction site worsens
Itching or rashes occur after you take your medication

Control Bleeding

To help control bleeding, bite firmly on the gauze placed by Dr. White. The pressure helps to form a blood clot in the tooth socket. If you have a lot of bleeding, bite on a regular tea bag. The tannic acid in the tea aids in forming a blood clot. Bite on the gauze or tea bag until the bleeding stops. Slight oozing of blood on the first day is normal.

Minimize Pain

To lessen any pain, take prescribed medication as directed. Don't drive while taking pain medication as you may feel drowsy. Ask your dentist if you may take over the counter medication.

Reduce Swelling

Put an ice pack on your cheek near the extraction site. Apply the ice pack to your cheek for 20 minutes. Then remove it for 5 minutes. Repeat as needed. You may see some bruising on your face. This is normal and will go away on its own.

Get Enough Rest

Limit activities for the first 24 hours after extraction. Rest during the day and go to bed early. When lying down, elevate your head slightly.

Do's & Don'ts

DO eat a diet of soft healthy foods and snacks. It may be easier to eat soft foods soon after an extraction. Also, drink plenty of liquids. Chew very carefully if lips and tongue are still numb.

DO brush your teeth gently. Avoid brushing around the extraction.

-but-

DON'T use any toothpaste. Rinsing toothpaste from your mouth may dislodge the blood clot.

DO keep the extraction site clean. After 24 hours, you may be able to gently rinse your mouth. But please check with the dentist first, as each case is

different. If the dentist okays rinsing, then rinse 4 times daily with 1 teaspoon of salt dissolved into a glass of lukewarm water.

DON'T drink with a straw. Sucking on a straw may dislodge the blood clot.

DON'T drink liquids that are too hot or too cold.

DON'T drink alcohol for at least 7 days after the extraction. Alcohol may slow the healing process.

DON'T smoke for 24 hours after the extraction. Smoking may break down the blood clot.