

What to Do & Expect After Tooth Extractions



1-2 Hours After

- We administer Exparel which should wear off in 72 hours.
- Take pain medication with food as soon as numbing begins to wear off. Follow instructions on the pain management card.
- Gauze should remain over surgical site and be changed every 30-minutes. Once saturated, gauze pads should be removed, discarded, and replaced with a new gauze pad. Repeat as needed to control bleeding. Stop using gauze pads once bleeding is minimal. If heavy bleeding occurs, bite on a moistened tea bag for 45-minutes.
- Place ice wrap or ice packs to sides of face where surgery was performed. Alternate 20-minutes on/20-minutes off. Ice is most beneficial during the first 24 hours after surgery.



The Night(S) After

- Remain upright when sitting and sleeping for 2-3 days after surgery to minimize bleeding and swelling.
- Brush teeth gently with a soft bristle brush. Avoid surgical sites.



The Day After

- Increase fluid and caloric intake with a soft food diet.
- **Avoid** strenuous activity and exercise for at least one week after surgery.
- Rinse after eating with warm salt water. Brush teeth gently with soft bristlebrush. Avoid surgical sites.
- Continue taking pain medicine as needed. It is not unusual to need pain medication for up to a week after surgery.
- Begin warm salt water rinses (1/2 tsp salt, 8oz warm water). To rinse, tilt head to left and right. Part lips and allow liquid to run out of mouth and into sink. Do not forcefully spit.



3-4 Days After

- Swelling will peak up to 3 days after surgery. Apply moist heat to the side of the face to reduce swelling.
- Use a plastic, curved syringe filled with warm salt water to flush extraction sites after eating. Fill the syringe with warm salt water and flush lower extraction site(s) only.
- Resume a regular diet once you are comfortable enough to eat.

7-10 Days After

- Gradually return to activities.



Bleeding

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in saliva is not uncommon. To minimize further bleeding, sit upright and avoid exertion. If bleeding does not subside, call for further assistance.

Swelling

The swelling that is normally expected is proportional to the surgery involved. Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes and sides of the face is not uncommon. If swelling or jaw stiffness has persisted for several days, there is no cause for alarm. This is a normal reaction to surgery.

Pain

Take pain medication as described on pain medication instruction card Steps 1-3 as needed. Stop medication if an allergic reaction occurs. The prescribed pain medication will make you groggy. Do not drive an automobile or operate machinery. Avoid alcoholic beverages while taking pain medicine.

Diet

After general anesthetic/IV sedation, liquids should be initially taken. Do not use straws. The sucking motion can cause more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot. You may eat soft food by chewing away from the surgical site. High calorie/high protein intake is very important. At least 5-6 glasses of liquids should be taken daily. Avoid hot foods/liquids while mouth is numb.

Keep Mouth Clean

Brushing teeth with soft bristle, non-electric tooth brush after each meal is essential for faster healing and preventing infection. Rinse with warm salt water 5-6 times a day or after eating (1/2 tspn salt, 8 oz. warm water). To rinse, tilt head to right then left, then part lips and allow liquid to run out of mouth into sink.

Discoloration

In some cases, discoloration of the skin follows swelling. 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.

Sutures

Sutures are placed to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. Sometimes they become dislodged. Just remove the suture from your mouth and discard. There will be a hole where the tooth was removed. The hole will continue to fill with new tissue and close within the next several months.

Dry Socket

A dry socket occurs when the blood clot gets dislodged prematurely. Smoking, sucking through a straw, and forceful spitting can cause dry socket. If a dry socket occurs, usually 5-7 days following surgery, call the office to schedule an appointment.

Other Complications

If you suddenly sit up/stand from a lying position, you may become dizzy. Make sure you sit for one minute before standing.

If numbness of the lips, chin, or tongue occurs, there is no cause for alarm. This is usually temporary.

Slight elevation in temperature following surgery is not uncommon.

Occasionally, patients may feel hard projections in the mouth with their tongue. These are not roots. These projections are bony walls, which supported the tooth, and will smooth over time.

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.

It is not uncommon if the throat becomes swollen and pain occurs. This will subside in 2-3 days.

Stiffness (Trismus) of the jaw may cause difficulty in opening your mouth for a few days following surgery.



Greensboro

6 North Pointe Court, Ste. 101, Greensboro, NC 27408
Phone: 336-275-6600 Fax: 336-275-6699

Asheboro

303 Ross Street, Asheboro, NC 27203
Phone: 336-318-1014 Fax: 336-318-2783

theoralsurgeryinstitute.com

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