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### **Patient Instructions: Extractions**

Follow these instructions carefully to ensure the successful healing of your tooth extraction.

#### **Before the Procedure:**

Schedule some time off, so you can take it easy for several days after your tooth extraction.  
If you are a woman taking birth control pills, schedule your appointment during the last week of your cycle.  
Arrange to have a friend or family member drive you home if needed.  
We may recommend that you take an anti-inflammatory medication before your appointment.

#### **During the First 24 Hours**

It's important that a blood clot forms on the extraction site to stop bleeding, reduce pain and speed healing.  
To protect the clot and avoid the pain of dry socket:

- Bite on a gauze pad firmly for 45-60 minutes. If bleeding or oozing use a moist tea bag for 45 to 60 minutes.
- Don't spit or suck on candy or through a straw.
- Do not rinse your mouth, brush or floss next to the extraction site.
- Limit yourself to calm activities and elevate your head with pillows when laying down to reduce bleeding.
- Do not drink hot, carbonated or alcoholic beverages.
- Avoid hot or spicy foods.
- Avoid foods with small seeds.

To control discomfort, take pain medication before the anesthetic has worn off or as recommended.

To keep swelling to a minimum, use an ice bag over the area, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.

When the numbness has worn off completely, drink lots of fluids and eat only soft nutritious foods, chewing on the opposite side.

#### **After the First 24 Hours**

Begin to eat normally as soon as it's comfortable

Resume brushing and flossing, but clean gently around the site for about a week.

If antibiotics were prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.

Reduce soreness or swelling by rinsing your mouth very gently with warm salt water. Use about one teaspoon of salt per glass of warm water. Rinse two to three times a day for the week following the extraction.

#### **When to Call Us:**

It's normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a tooth extraction, but call us right away if you have:

- Heavy or increased bleeding
- Pain or swelling that increases or continues beyond two or three days
- A bad taste or odor in your mouth
- A reaction to the medication