

# Park Family Dental

## POST OPERATIVE CARE FOR EXTRACTIONS

**BLEEDING** - Bite on a gauze pad for one to two hours and then discard. **DO NOT** put in new gauze unless the bleeding is severe. Gauze can pull out your blood clot and cause a dry socket. A small amount of bleeding is normal. You can either swallow it or let it drip out onto a paper towel. **DO NOT** Spit! If heavy bleeding continues, moisten your extra gauze, fold gauze tightly, and place over bleeding area. Maintain firm biting or finger pressure for 30 minutes. A tea bag, wet or dry, is an excellent substitute for a gauze pack.

**DO NOT RINSE** – No rinsing your mouth today. **DO NOT** use straws for drinking. Tomorrow, rinse every 5 to 6 hours, using warm salt water. Be gentle and **DO NOT** use force to spit out. Continue rinsing for several days.

**DIET** - No eating or drinking for one hour (or until gauze is out). Hot, spicy, or coarse foods should be avoided. Avoid food with hard or small particles (popcorn, nuts, rice etc.) that may become stuck in the tooth extraction sites. Any other food that the patient can tolerate is permissible. It is important that the patient drinks at least 2 quarts of fluid per day. Liquid meal supplements (Meritine, Nutrament, etc.), available at your pharmacy and baby foods are excellent food sources for those few days, if needed.

**NO SMOKING OR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** – No smoking or drinking for one week. Please do your best to **avoid it completely**. You will regret it if you get a dry socket. Smoking and drinking greatly increases this risk. Dry Sockets are extremely painful. You will know if you have one by severe pain that is progressively getting worse (some people describe it as the worst pain they have ever felt). Should you suspect a dry socket, please give us a call so we can treat it accordingly.

**ANESTHESIA** - Patients who have received a general anesthesia (IV sedation) should **NOT**:

- A) Drive a vehicle or operate any machinery within the same day of surgery.
- B) Undertake any responsible business matters within the same day of surgery.
- C) Drink any alcohol on the day of surgery.
- D) Take any medication without approval.

**PAIN MANAGEMENT**- Pain is to be expected and may be severe for the first couple of days (1-2). **One must**:

- A) Take the prescribed medication before the anesthetic wears off. It is best to stay ahead of the pain.
- B) Do take your prescribed medication to relieve pain. If dizzy or weak, lie down.
- C) Allow approximately 45 minutes for pain medication to take effect.
- D) If pain is minimal you may take over the counter pain medication instead of your prescription medication. **Do NOT** take along with your prescription medication unless instructed to do so.
- E) If you were prescribed Norco or Tylenol 3 (Tylenol with codeine) you may alternate this medication with ibuprofen (aka Advil/Motrin) but **NO Tylenol!**. Follow a 3-hour pattern. Start with your Norco/Tylenol 3, then 3 hours later take ibuprofen. 3 hours later, go back to your Norco/Tylenol 3. Follow this pattern until you are out of pain. If you were prescribed a medication that **is not** Norco or Tylenol 3, please call us or ask your pharmacist before taking **any** over the counter medications.

**SWELLING** - Swelling is to be expected and may reach its maximum up to 3 days after surgery and last for 1-3 weeks. This is no cause for alarm. It is normal to have increased swelling in the morning due to gravity. Swelling may be reduced by:

- A) Applying an ice pack or chopped ice to the affected area 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off as much as possible for the first 48 hours.
- B) After 48 hours substitute a hot water bottle or hot towel in the same manner until swelling has receded.
- C) Keeping your head slightly elevated when lying down (i.e., extra pillow or two).

**BRUISING** - Bruising may occur but this shouldn't be a cause for alarm. This is normal and should disappear in about 2 weeks. You may also have a slight earache or sore throat. Should this become worse after several days, give us a call.

**NAUSEA** - Nausea rarely occurs and may be avoided by taking pain medication with a glass of milk or lowering your dosage by breaking the pill in half. If nausea is severe, stop taking the prescribed medication and switch to ibuprofen, Advil, or Motrin if permissible. If pain is too severe to handle and is progressively getting worse, give us a call.

**ANTIBIOTICS** - Antibiotics (Amoxicillin, Clindamycin etc.), if prescribed, must be taken as directed and for the entire length of time indicated on the bottle. Antibiotic medication may **decrease the effectiveness of birth control pills**. Therefore, patients taking birth control pills who have been prescribed antibiotics should use an additional method of contraception during the remainder of the contraceptive cycle.

**FEELING ILL** - Occasionally following oral surgery, unrelated complications may occur (Tonsillitis, flu or cold). This is because your immunity may have been low prior to or weakened following surgery. If you feel run down or have not eaten or slept for several days, it is wise to avoid crowds, drafts, and get as much rest as possible. On the other hand, if you feel well and strong, you may carry on with your normal activities regardless of the swelling or bruising.

**STITCHES** – Stitches will dissolve within 7 to 10 days. This happens gradually and you may notice small pieces breaking off. No appointment is necessary for removal unless instructed otherwise. Should the stitches become bothersome, we can remove them only if 7 days have passed since your surgery and your surgery did not involve a bone graft or sinus lift.

**IMMEDIATE DENTURES** – If given an immediate denture, it should not be removed until you have been seen again by your dentist regardless of pain. This is usually within a few days. Doing so allows your gums to heal to the correct shape to fit your denture. Sores on the gums are common and will be treated on this visit and dentures will be adjusted accordingly.

**BONE FRAGMENTS** - Small bone fragments usually work their way through the gums during the healing process. Many people mistakenly confuse these as missed pieces of their extracted tooth. (Please be assured that we do check to make sure your entire tooth was removed during the procedure). These bone fragments will usually work themselves out within a couple of weeks. If lingering or bothersome, contact our office for removal.

**TIGHTNESS OF THE JAW** - Jaw muscles may cause difficulty in opening the mouth. This is due to inflammation and swelling. This should disappear within a few days. Application of a warm towel may be of some benefit.

**YOUR LIPS** – Your lips should be kept moist with a cream or Vaseline following surgery to avoid cracking. There may be a numb feeling on your lower lip if lower teeth were removed. The feeling should return gradually. It may remain numb anywhere from a few days to a few months. This is especially true with impacted teeth.

**IF ANY UNUSUAL SYMPTOMS OCCUR OR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR PROGRESS, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE. WE ARE ALWAYS WILLING TO EXAMINE THE HEALING SITE SHOULD THERE BE ANY CONCERNS. IT IS ALWAYS BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY!**

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY PLEASE CONTACT DR. ROH at (708) 439-6218**

For non-emergency questions/concerns please call our office. You may call after business hours and leave a voicemail. We will return your call promptly when we return to the office.

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