**Post-operative instructions after a tooth removal**

1. After an extraction it is important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process.
2. If the blood clot does not form or it is disturbed or rinsed out, you will develop a painful dry socket.
3. Keep biting on the gauze for 20 minutes. Keep constant pressure on gauze. Don’t check it every 5 minutes, as it will start to bleed again. Leave the gauze out if it is not bleeding after 20 minutes.
4. If it starts to bleed later, apply direct pressure with a fresh piece of gauze to the socket for 20 minutes. You can also use a wet teabag (regular tea) to bite on.
5. Do not spit out as it may cause bleeding. You will have excess saliva in your mouth and a little bit of blood and this may look like a lot of bleeding, but indeed it is mostly saliva.
6. If the bleeding does not stop and keep bleeding profusely, contact our office, or if it is after hours go straight to the hospital.
7. The numb feeling will start to go away after 2-4 hours.
8. Do not rinse your mouth for 24 hours at all. After 24 hours rinse with lukewarm salty water very gently. DO NOT RINSE IN THE SOCKET WHERE THE TOOTH WAS REMOVED!
9. Clean your teeth as usual, but just be careful to dislodge the blood clot. Do not rinse out aggressively as this will dislodge the blood clot. Rinse very gently.
10. You can drink water, but do not use a straw to drink. Sip the water on the other side of the extraction site.
11. Do not drink coffee, tea or alcohol for the next 2 days.
12. If you smoke, do not smoke for 2 days as you will develop a dry socket.
13. Eat soft, cold food for the next few day. Examples include yoghurt, smoothies and soup.
14. No exercise is allowed for the next 24 hours.
15. Take pain medication 1 hour after the tooth extraction and continue to use as required if you still experience pain. You might have up to 2 weeks (or more) of tenderness on the extraction site as it is healing.
16. The gum normally heals during the following week and you might feel bone in the socket area with your tongue. This is normal. IT IS NOT A PIECE OF THE TOOTH THAT WAS LEFT BEHIND! The bone will remodel over the next 3-4 months and smoothen out.
17. Small pieces of bone or tooth fragments might push through your gum over the next few weeks. This is normal and it is called sequestrum. If it bothers you contact our office.
18. Sometimes a dry socket develops after 2-3 days. You will know if you have a dry socket because of the extreme pain and possible bad smell. Please contact our office for assessment and treatment if required.
19. If any stitches (sutures) were placed, it will dissolve in 14-21 days.
20. You might experience swelling and bruising around the extraction site