



Dental Associates of the Southwest

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR TOOTH EXTRACTIONS

BLEEDING: Pressure stops bleeding. Pressure can be provided on the extraction site by gently biting on gauze. Normally bleeding lasts 30 minutes to 1-1/2 hours. If bleeding persists after biting on gauze for 1-1/2 hours try biting on a black tea bag for an additional 30 minutes. If you are still bleeding after this, please contact our office.

Once the bleeding has stopped, the gauze is no longer needed. You will experience “oozing” which is a normal part of the healing process. Oozing will be noticed as a red tinge to your saliva and can last up to 48 hours. Placing a towel over your pillowcase will protect your pillow at night.

Please not that sucking on the wound site, drinking alcoholic or carbonated beverages, exertion from exercise, smoking, drinking through a straw or spitting the blood out will cause the extraction site to bleed longer. Please avoid these activities for 24 to 48 hours to allow the blood clot to mature. Swallowing the blood will make you nauseous so it is better to dribble the blood into a cup.

DRY SOCKET: If the blood clot does not mature you are at risk for development of a “dry sock.” A dry socket occurs when the normal healing process is disrupted. When a tooth is removed the bone in your jaw is exposed. Normally a blood clot will form over the bone which allows your body to heal from the inside. If the blood clot comes loose the bone becomes exposed. A superficial infection on top of the bone will develop. This is called a dry socket. It presents as severe pain developing 2 to 3 days after the extraction. It cannot be cured by oral antibiotics. The socket can be packed with a medicament that will resolve 85 to 95 % of the pain within 5 to 30 minutes. This packing may need to be replaced one to three times over the next week.

TOOTH BRUSHING: It is best to avoid toothpaste for the first 48 hours following an extraction. Toothpaste tends to be dry and you may want to spit it out. This can lead to further bleeding and or a dry socket. Tyou should use warm water on the toothbrush and brush the teeth gently around the extraction site while keeping the bristles off of the extraction site. After 48 hours the blood clot is mature, you can rinse vigorously with warm water or warm salt water to clean the extraction site. It can take up to a month or longer for the gums to heal over the extraction site completely.

FOOD: Foods can be taken as tolerated. Tomato based foods are acidic and tend to sting the wound. Spicy foods such as tortilla chips should be avoided.

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