

What to Do Following Removal of a Tooth (Teeth)

After an extraction, it is important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. That is why we ask you to bite down on a gauze pad for 45 to 60 minutes after the tooth/teeth are removed. If bleeding or oozing continues after you remove the gauze pad, place another gauze pad in the socket area from the take-home pack you were given and bite down firmly again for another 30 minutes. You may have to repeat this process several times until the bleeding stops. You may stop biting on down on gauze only after the bleeding has stopped completely. At this point a blood clot will have formed in the socket(s)

After the blood clot has formed, it is important to protect it for the next 24 hours. So, DO NOT...

1. Smoke
2. Suck through a straw
3. Rinse out your mouth vigorously
4. Clean the teeth immediately next to the extraction site.

These activities will dislodge the clot and slow down healing. Limit yourself to calm activities for the first 24 hours. This keeps your blood pressure lower, reduces bleeding or oozing and helps the healing process.

Following the extraction(s) you may feel some swelling. Using an ice bag will help keep the swelling to a minimum (ten minutes on, ten minutes off). any swelling that does occur usually begins to go down after 48 hours.

If you have any discomfort, take the pain medication prescribed for you by the doctor in the manner directed. If you have also been prescribed antibiotics, be sure and finish all of them as the prescription dictates, even if you feel that the signs and symptoms of infection are gone (VERY important). Drink lots of fluids and eat a soft nutritious diet on the day of the extraction(s). Avoid alcohol and any hot, spicy, or chewy foods. If you feel up to it, you may resume your normal diet the next day or whenever it is comfortable to do so.

Beginning the day after the extraction(s), you may begin GENTLY rinsing your mouth with saltwater three times a day (one tsp. of salt in a cup of warm water: rinse-swish-spit). Also, rinse gently after meals. It helps to keep food particles out of the extraction site(s). It is important that you resume your normal dental cleaning routine after 24 hours. This should include brushing your teeth and tongue and flossing at least once a day. Doing this will speed the healing process and keep your mouth and breath fresh.

Call the office right away if you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling after two or three days, or a reaction to the medication. Remember, you have just had a surgical procedure done and it will take a couple of days to feel your normal self again. In the meantime, take it easy and give your body a chance to heal properly.