

## Post-Operative Instructions Following Dental Surgery and Tooth Removal

- Bleeding:** Biting on the gauze pads may be necessary at least for the first few hours to control bleeding-- typically biting on gauze for one hour is sufficient. Keep the head elevated and rest. Do not spit or rinse excessively or engage in physical activity since this stimulates bleeding. Some oozing could last up to 24 hours.  
**Note:** If heavy bleeding persists, replace the gauze with a clean folded gauze pad that has been moistened with tap water and place over the surgery site and maintain pressure until the bleeding stops. In rare cases, a moistened tea bag (tannic acid) may need to be used to encourage clotting (regular, not herbal tea). Call Dr. Craig if bleeding does not stop.
- Swelling:** This is normal following a surgical procedure in the mouth. It should reach its maximum in 48-72 hours and then diminish by the fifth post-operative day.  
Place ice or cold compresses on the face in the region of the surgery for ten minutes every half-hour for the first eight to twelve hours. Ice only for the first 3 days then switch to heat.
- Discomfort:** The most discomfort that you will experience will occur as the anesthetic wears off—usually 1-2 hours after surgery. If a long-acting anesthetic was used, you may be numb for longer than normal. \*\*\*If Exparel (site specific) is placed it can take up to 72 hours for it to wear off\*\*\*  
Do not wait for the pain to become severe before taking the medications since the medicine will require about 30-45 minutes to take effect. It is easier to prevent pain than to try to relieve it after the fact. Pain will gradually diminish over the next few days. Typically, we suggest 800mg of ibuprofen and 1000mg of acetaminophen every 6 hours for pain. We suggest you take this regimen for at least the first two days and in subsequent days as you feel necessary.
- Smoking:** Absolutely no smoking for the week following extraction. The use of Nicotine patches or lozenges are recommended. If smoking is done it can/will increase your chance of getting a dry socket or lead to failure of your bone graft.
- Diet:** Do not chew or eat until the numbness wears off. Liquids are fine. When the numbness wears off, you can start with soft diet and continue for the next week following surgery.  
If bone grafting has been completed **DO NOT** eat hard/crunchy foods on the site for 3-4 weeks. If this occurs it may cause the bone graft to fail and can result in the procedure needing to be redone at your expense!!!!  
**\*\*\*\*NO USE OF A STRAW FOR THE NEXT WEEK\*\*\*\***
- Activity:** For the first 24 hours, restrict activity to avoid heart and blood pressure increases.
- Blood draw:** In some cases blood will be drawn to complete for bone grafting purposes as well to aid in the healing of your extraction sites. This may lead to possible bruising on arms or hands.
- Starting the day after surgery:**
1. Brush teeth as you typically would. Use the toothettes dipped in ioRinse to cleanse the surgical site 2x/day or swish around the whole mouth for up to 1 minute and then let dribble out. For best effect, avoid eating or drinking for 30 minutes following use. As the surgical site becomes more comfortable, you can gently brush the surgery site.

2. Use warm salt water as a mouth rinse 3-5 times per day for 5-7 days after the surgery. (1 tsp salt in a glass of warm water). This can be done prior to use of the ioRinse or at a different time.
3. If antibiotics are prescribed, be sure to take them all as directed. Note: They can render birth control pills ineffective.
4. Absorbable sutures may have been used and do not need to be removed. Typically will dissolve in 1-2 weeks.
5. Dry socket is a delayed healing response, which may occur during the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> post-operative day. Dry sockets usually occur on the lower and are typically characterized by a throbbing pain radiating to the whole side of the face.
6. Don't chew hard food (even on a hard crust of bread or on ice) for 4-6 weeks after having lower teeth removed or participate in sports where you may be hit in the jaw. The lower jaw is temporarily weak and prone to fracture.

**Contact the Doctor if:**

1. Bleeding is excessive and cannot be controlled.
2. Discomfort is poorly controlled or you suspect you have a dry socket.
3. Swelling is excessive, spreading, or continuing to enlarge after 72 hours.
4. Allergies or other reactions to medications occur.

Office Telephone Number: (920) 983-8383  
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**Next Appointment (Date/Time):** \_\_\_\_\_