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### **Post-op Instructions –Tooth Extraction**

**DO NOT DISTURB THE AREA:** For the next few days, and especially the first 24 hours, it is very important to allow your body to form a good clot and start the natural healing process. Swishing, sucking through a straw, and smoking can all dislodge the clot. Keep anything sharp from entering the wound (crunchy food, toothpicks, eating utensils). Be sure to chew on the opposite side for 24 hours.

**BLEEDING:** When you leave the office, you might be biting on a gauze pad to control bleeding. Keep slight pressure on this gauze for at least 30 minutes. Don't change it during this time; it needs to remain undisturbed while a clot forms in the extraction socket. After 30 minutes you may remove it.

**SMOKING:** Smoking should be stopped following surgery. Also the suction created when inhaling cigarettes can dislodge the clot. Smokers are at greater risk of developing a painful Dry Socket.

**PAIN:** Some discomfort is normal after surgery. To minimize pain, Take two Tylenol, Advil or similar non-aspirin pain reliever every 3 to 4 hours until bedtime to maintain comfort. Take it before the anesthesia wears off. If prescription pain medication is prescribed, take it as instructed on the label.

**SWELLING:** Applying an ice bag to the face over the operated area will minimize swelling.

**NUMBNESS:** The local anesthetic will cause you to be numb for several hours after you leave the office. Be very careful not to bite, chew, pinch, or scratch the numb area.

**BRUSHING:** Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours after surgery. After this, you may brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery for 3 days.

**RINSING:** Avoid all rinsing or swishing for 24 hours after extraction. Rinsing can disturb the formation of a healing blood clot which is essential to proper healing. This could cause bleeding and risk of dry socket. After 24 hours you may begin gentle rinsing with a saltwater solution (1/2 teaspoon salt + 1/2 teaspoon soda + 8 ounces warm water). Avoid commercial mouth rinses.

**DIET:** Eat soft foods for the first two days. Drink plenty of water. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours.

**ACTIVITY:** After leaving the office, rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day.

**ANTIBIOTICS:** If you were given an antibiotic prescription, take all of them as directed until they are gone. **Women:** some antibiotics can reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills.

**FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS:** You may need to return to the office to have sutures removed, or just for a brief follow-up healing check.

Please call you dentist if you have:

- Uncontrollable pain
- Excessive or severe bleeding
- Marked fever
- Excessive warm swelling occurring a few days after the procedure
- Reactions to medications, especially rash, itching, or breathing problems