



Tooth extraction after-care

Following extraction of a tooth or teeth, there are some things that you can do to maximize healing, and minimize your chance of discomfort and post-operative complications such as infection or a dry-socket:

- Maintain firm biting pressure on the gauze that was placed for the amount of time directed by your doctor. When this time is up, remove the gauze. If active bleeding (some oozing is alright) is still present, apply another gauze for the same amount of time. Repeat until bleeding has stopped.
- For *at least* the next 48 hours, avoid actions that cause a vacuum in your mouth that could dislodge the blood clot. This includes spitting forcefully, using a straw, smoking, or sneezing.
- Take pain medicines as directed by your doctor. Our typical recommendation is to take 2 extra strength Tylenol (1000mg acetaminophen) and 2-3 Advil/Motrin (400- 600 mg ibuprofen) every 6-8 hours. These drugs may be staggered for a more lasting effect. These drugs are available in combination as Advil Dual action, we recommend separate tablets as it is both cheaper and easier to reach the maximum safe therapeutic levels. This combination should not be used for more than 5 days. Always follow the directions and precautions on the drug box/insert.
- Cool, soft foods such as cottage cheese, ice cream, or yogurt are recommended to keep from irritating the extraction site. When you return to a normal diet is up to you and how you are feeling.
- We recommend taking it easy for the 24 hours following tooth extraction, get plenty of rest and fluids jumpstart the healing process.
- Be careful while you are numb, as you have an increased likelihood of biting or burning yourself.
- If stitches were placed, they will come out on their own when they are ready.
- Cold packs in the 24 hours following a procedure can help minimize the risk of swelling. Apply for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.
- Starting 24 hours post extraction, rinsing your mouth out with a warm saltwater rinse can help keep the area clean. This is also when you can start brushing your teeth normally again, being careful not to dislodge the clot.
- If you experience prolonged bleeding, fever, nausea, vomiting, swelling, severe pain, or pain that gets worse over time, contact us right away.

Sinus precautions necessary (please see additional sheet)

**If you have any concerns or questions, please contact our office at 515-223-1940.
Even if we are not in the office, after hours contact information will be available.**

