

INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING DENTAL EXTRACTIONS

1. A gauze pack has been placed over the extraction site. Hold this in place with a gentle biting pressure for at least one hour. The gauze pack may be changed every hour thereafter if bleeding continues. Slight bleeding for up to 24 hours following an extraction is normal.
2. Avoid rinsing vigorously for the first 8 to 12 hours. If you rinse the day of surgery, rinse gently with cool water to avoid disturbing the blood clot.
3. Avoid strong physical exertion for 24 hours. Do not smoke for 24 hours; smoking increases the risk of complications after extractions.
4. An ice pack placed over your cheek or jaw where the extraction was done may reduce swelling. As soon as possible, put the ice pack over the area for 20 minutes, and repeat. Continue this for 8–12 hours to help reduce the amount of swelling.
5. Eat soft or liquid foods on the day of your extraction. Ice cream, jello, milk shakes, etc. are nutritional and soothing, and cool carbonated soft drinks may help settle your stomach.
6. If you have been given a pain prescription, it is best to take it with milk or food. Some pain medications may cause nausea or vomiting if taken on a totally empty stomach. Avoid driving or operating machinery if the pain medicine makes you drowsy or lightheaded.
7. During the second to seventh days, you can promote healing by rinsing your mouth 4–6 times per day with warm salt water rinses. Apply heat to any areas of swelling after the second postoperative day.
8. Some swelling is normal. If the area becomes severely swollen after several days, or if you develop a temperature, please call our office. If sutures (stitches) have been placed, they are of the dissolving type and will come loose over the first week.
9. In the event of an emergency, during the day, call our office. After hours the answering service will answer the office phone. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. Please attempt to call for prescription refills during normal business hours. If you cannot reach us and feel you have an emergency that cannot wait, please call or go to the emergency room at St. Vincent's Hospital (503-297-4411).