

CARE FOLLOWING TOOTH EXTRACTION

To stop bleeding: Pressure is what stops bleeding, so apply pressure to the extraction area by biting on a thick gauze pad. Continue that pressure for about 30 minutes. Then, remove the gauze and look at the extraction site. If blood is still flowing out of the socket, put in a new gauze pad and bite for another 30 minutes (repeat as necessary). When there is a Jello-like consistency clot with no bleeding, you can stop with the gauze.

To prevent the clot from being disturbed: Do not rinse your mouth for 24 hours. Avoid brushing the extraction site for a few days. Avoid eating foods that can irritate or get stuck in the extraction site, such as nuts, hard crunchy foods, sticky foods, or foods that require a lot of chewing. Avoid strenuous physical activity for 1-2 days. Don't use straws to drink beverages. Don't consume alcoholic beverages. Avoid smoking until healing is well established.

To control pain: I recommend taking a homeopathic remedy (arnica montana) immediately after the extraction to control pain and facilitate healing. If there is pain when the local anesthetic wears off, use non-prescription pain medications first (like aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or naproxen). If that is not adequate, a prescription narcotic pain medication may be required.

To control swelling (optional): Apply ice packs to the face over the extraction site for the first few hours. Hold it on for 5 minutes, then off for 5 minutes, and continue that sequence for a few hours.

To promote healing: Avoiding certain foods does not mean avoid eating. Maintain an adequate, nutritionally balanced food/liquid intake because you will need the energy and nutrients to heal properly.

If you are numb from a local anesthetic, be aware that you could accidentally and unknowingly bite or burn your lips or tongue if you eat, or are not extremely careful. If you have any problems, concerns, or questions, call me! I don't mind being disturbed. After hours, I can be reached via my emergency pager.

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