

Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Associates of Chester County, LTD.

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Taking Care of Your Mouth

When you've had a tooth extracted (removed), you need to take care of your mouth. Doing certain things, even on the first day, may help you feel better and heal faster.



Control of Bleeding

To help control bleeding, bite gently on the gauze placed at our office. The pressure helps to form a blood clot in the tooth socket. Change the gauze every 20 to 30 minutes and continue to apply gentle pressure until the bleeding stops. Should bleeding restart, use the gauze again as described above. Bleeding can occur for several hours after surgery. Avoid drinking through a straw or smoking as this can make bleeding persist.



Minimize Pain

Start by taking your prescribed or recommended medication. Don't drive while taking narcotic pain medication as you may feel drowsy. **Antibiotics and some pain medications may alter the effectiveness of birth control pills. Consult your physician/gynecologist for assistance regarding additional methods of birth control.**



Reduce Swelling

If you were given an ice pack. Put the ice pack on your cheek near the extraction site and apply for 20 minutes. Then, remove it for 20 minutes and refreeze. **Repeat this for the first 24 hours only. Do not apply ice to your face after the first 24 hours. Do not apply heat.**

Oral Hygiene



Gentle tooth brushing may be done with special caution near the area of surgery. **This should not be done until the day after surgery. Do not spit while rinsing.** Rinsing toothpaste from your mouth may dislodge the blood clot.



Keep the extraction site clean. **After 24 hours,** gently rinse your mouth with warm salt water. Rinse 4 to 5 times a day, for one week with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt in a glass of water. Occasional rinsing for an additional two weeks is appropriate for most extraction sites. This is especially important after meals or snacks.

If you underwent IV Sedation or General Anesthesia:

- You may not drive on day of surgery.
- You should have a responsible adult with you for at least 4-8 hours after your surgery
- You should stand up slowly from a sitting or lying position to avoid lightheadedness as related to the anesthetic medications or the fasting you did prior to surgery

Call Your Surgeon at 610-431-2161 if:

- Pain becomes more severe 2-3 days after your extraction
- Bleeding becomes hard to control (slight oozing of blood on the first day is normal)
- Swelling around the extraction site increases past the third day
- Itching or rashes occur after you take medication (may be an allergic reaction)

Don'ts

Below are some things to **avoid** while you're healing.



Don't drink with a straw for 4 days. Sucking on a straw may dislodge a clot.



Limit your Alcohol use if taking **narcotic** pain medication. Avoid commercial mouthwash for 2 weeks.



Don't Smoke for 5-7 days. Smoking may break down the blood clot, causing a painful tooth socket.

Special Instructions:

Eating While You Heal

Eating right will help you heal faster after your tooth extraction. Start with only liquids and soft foods until numbness wears off (applesauce, pudding, jello)



After Numbness is Gone Begin With Soft Foods and Liquids

- Eat soft foods such as eggs, oatmeal, mashed potatoes, bananas, pasta and soups.
- Also drink liquids high in nutrients such as vegetable and fruit juices or high-protein drinks.

Move On to Solid Food



- Cut food into small pieces to ease chewing.
- Use a blender for hard-to-chew foods, such as apples and carrots.

Be Careful When You Chew

- Limit chewing. Avoid crunchy or sticky foods, such as popcorn, pretzels, taffy and nuts.



Frequently Asked Questions About Recovery from Extraction of Teeth

How do I use the **gauze**?

You should use the gauze until most of the bleeding has stopped. You need to bite down gently on the gauze to help the bleeding stop otherwise the gauze will only act as a sponge, absorbing the blood, but not helping to stop the bleeding. When you think you can stop using the gauze, check the sites for any dripping or oozing. If there is none, you should be able to stop using the gauze.

How long will I see **bleeding**?

Bleeding time varies for each patient. You should see a gradual lessening of the bleeding rather than expecting it all to be stopped at a certain time. A little bleeding may be evident when you wake up the next morning. This is not a worry as long as it stops again. If your bleeding seems uncontrolled or is not slowing down, please call the office.

What are the signs of a **dry socket**?

Dry sockets usually do not occur until the fifth day after surgery. You would have an increase in pain that seems worse than it was the first few days after surgery. The pain is typically not controlled by pain medication or it seems like it is getting worse. You may have an earache, throbbing jaw pain and it usually will wake you from a sound sleep. If you experience these symptoms, please call our office.

How much **swelling** will I get?

You can generally expect some swelling, although it is variable for all patients and procedures. Swelling can take two to three days to peak and should generally resolve in five to seven days. Swelling is a sign of infection only if it is increasing past the third day or if it returned after the swelling had originally resolved.

Is **bruising** normal after extractions?

Some patients may bruise after extraction of teeth. It is generally mild and may only start on the third to fifth day. Frequent use of aspirin and some herbal medications may contribute to bruising.

How long do I use the **ice**?

Ice may help to control swelling. You should use the ice packs for the first day only. Do not use it after twenty-four hours as it may prevent the swelling from resolving.

When can I **exercise**?

We ask that you refrain from strenuous exercise for 24 hours after surgery. After that time you can proceed with discretion and as tolerated

With proper care, your mouth should heal quickly. Call our office if you have any problems or questions.
(610)431-2161

For additional information, please visit our website @ www.oralurgerychestercounty.com