

*I Had An Extraction. Now What Do I Do?*

Proper care of the mouth following most dental procedures can reduce complications and speed the healing of the surgical area.

1. **Protection of the blood clot...** Maintain gentle pressure by biting on the gauze sponge that has been placed over the surgical area. Keep steady firm pressure for 45 minutes. Repeat as often as needed. Be sure to moisten the gauze with a little water so that it won't stick to the clot.
2. **Do not rinse...** or use a mouthwash for at least 24 hours. After 24 hours, rinse with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon table salt in 8 oz. of warm water) every 1-2 hours is recommended. The use of commercial mouthwashes during the healing period is not advised due to the alcohol content.
3. **Discomfort...** Following dental surgery it is normal to experience some discomfort. If medication has been given or prescribed, take as instructed.
4. **The toothbrush...** may be carefully used in the area of the mouth not involved by the surgical procedures. A clean mouth heals faster.
5. **Eating...** Adequate food and fluid intake following surgery is most important. If you find that eating your regular diet is too difficult, you may supplement your diet with liquids such as Carnation Instant Breakfast (CIB / any flavor). The high quality, nutritional value of CIB is important for prompt healing following such procedures. If you are not able to chew solid foods of any nature, for several days or longer, contact our office.
6. **Avoid...** all excessive activity. Don't pick at the surgical area. Don't consume liquids through a straw. Avoid alcoholic beverages and refrain from smoking until healing is well established.
7. **Sutures...** If they were used, do not fail to return for their removal on the appointment date given.
8. **Control swelling...** Gently apply ice packs to area for periods of 20 minutes on, 10 minutes off. This procedure should continue for the first 24 hours only.
9. **Medications...** Make sure you take your prescribed medications strictly following instructions. **Women taking birth control medications should be aware that antibiotics can cause the birth control medications to be ineffective possibly resulting in pregnancy. Alternate methods should be used while on the antibiotics.**
10. **Allergic reactions...** for generalized rash, itching, or other reactions, call our office immediately. If we are not available at the time, go to the nearest hospital emergency room.
11. **Do not hesitate...** to call if any questions arise.