VALENTINE
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Patient Instructions: After Tooth Extractions

After tooth extraction, it's important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. That's why we ask you to bite on a gauze pad changing it every 30 minutes until numbness you have from the procedure has worn off completely. Do not keep gauze in longer than two hours after procedure. At that point the gauze is usually no longer needed. It is important to bite on the gauze until your numbness has worn off completely to avoid accidentally biting your tongue or cheek while they are numb. The primary purposes for the gauze are to absorb excess fluids and to prevent trauma to numb areas. If you feel your bleeding is excessive and not slowing down, then a slightly moistened regular tea bag (black tea) can be used as a substitute for the gauze pad, biting gently for 30 minutes then changing the bag and repeating if necessary. The tannic acid in tea helps form a blood clot. Ice to the outside area of your face may also assist in slowing bleeding.

After the blood clot forms, it is important not to disturb or dislodge the clot as it is critical to the healing process. Do not rinse vigorously, avoid using straws, avoid smoking or vaping for one week. These activities will dislodge or dissolve the blood clot and delay the healing process. Limit vigorous exercise for 4 to 5 days as this will increase blood pressure and may cause bleeding from the extraction site.

After the tooth is extracted you will likely feel some discomfort and experience swelling at the site. An ice pack or an unopened bag of frozen peas or corn applied to the area will help to keep swelling to a minimum. The swelling usually subsides after 48 to 72 hours.

Use pain medication as directed. Call the office if the medications aren't effective in controlling your discomfort. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them as directed, even if signs and symptoms of infection begin to subside. Drink additional fluids and eat nutritious soft food on the day of the extraction. You can eat normally as soon as you are comfortable, but please avoid nuts, chips, seeds and popcorn for 2 weeks.

It is important to resume your normal dental routine of brushing and flossing the day following your procedure. This will speed the healing and help keep your mouth clean.

After several days (4 to 5) you may resume your normal daily activities. If you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling after the initial 2-3-day period, or a reaction to any of the prescribed medications, call our office immediately for additional instructions.