



## Extractions

### At home patient instructions after treatment

#### Bleeding

There may be some bleeding or oozing after the pack is removed. If so, follow this procedure:

- Fold a piece of clean gauze into a pad thick enough to bite on. Dampen the pad and place it directly on the extraction site.
- Apply moderate pressure by closing the teeth firmly over this pad. Maintain this pressure for about 30 minutes. If the pad becomes soaked, replace it with a clean one as necessary.
- Do not suck on the extraction site.
- A slight amount of blood may leak at the extraction site until a clot forms, however, if heavy bleeding continues, call your dentist. (remember, though, that a lot of saliva and a little blood can look like a lot of bleeding)

#### The blood clot

After an extraction, a blood clot forms in the tooth socket. This clot is an important part of the normal healing process. You should therefore avoid activities that might disturb the clot. Here's how to protect it:

- Do not smoke, or rinse your mouth vigorously, or drink through a straw for 24 hours. These activities create suction in the mouth, which could dislodge the clot and delay healing.
- Do not clean the teeth next to the healing tooth socket for the rest of the day. You should, however, brush and floss your other teeth thoroughly, gently rinse your mouth afterward.
- Limit strenuous activity for 24 hours after the extraction. This will reduce bleeding and help the blood clot to form.

## Swelling and pain

After a tooth is removed, you may have some discomfort and notice some swelling. You can help reduce swelling. You can help reduce swelling and pain by applying cold compresses to the face. An ice bag or cold, moist cloth can be used periodically. The dentist may give you specific instructions on how long and how often to use cold compress. The dentist may also give you plastic bag of ice to use on your way home from the office.

## Medication

Your dentist may prescribe medication to control pain and prevent infection. Use it only as directed. If the medication prescribed does not seem to work for you, do not increase the dosage. If you have prolonged or severe pain, swelling, bleeding, or fever, call your dentist immediately. He or she will give you exact instructions on how to care for your problem.

## Diet

After the extraction, drink lots of liquids and eat soft, nutritious foods. Avoid alcoholic beverages and hot liquids. Begin eating solid foods the next day or as soon as you can chew comfortably. For about two days, try to chew food on the side opposite the extraction site. If you are troubled by nausea and vomiting, call your dentist for advice.

## Rinsing

The day after the extraction, gently rinse your mouth with warm salt water (half a teaspoon of salt in an 8 oz. glass of warm water). Rinsing after meals is important to keep food particles out of the extraction site, but remember not to rinse your mouth vigorously. Avoid using a mouth rinse or mouthwash during this early healing period.

## Oral hygiene

It is important to continue to floss your teeth and brush thoroughly at least twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste. The tongue should also be brushed. This will help eliminate the bad breath and unpleasant taste that is common after an extraction. Always use a soft bristle brush so that you do not injure the tissues in your mouth. On the day of the extraction, avoid cleaning the teeth next to the healing tooth socket.