



Extraction Home Care Instructions

As you can most certainly realize by now, you've had a tooth extracted. In order to aid in normal healing, here are a few things to look out for and tips on how to take care of things:

- Swelling is a normal, expected occurrence after any dental surgery. Swelling in the local area indicates more blood flow bringing immune cells into the area for repair. Swelling can often cause discomfort, so treat accordingly with ibuprofen or acetaminophen unless the doctor has given you something else. Only when swelling becomes large and noticeable from outside the mouth or hinders your ability to breathe or swallow should you become concerned and seek help.
 - If the doctor had to use the drill to get the tooth out, increased swelling can be anticipated. It is recommended you used an ice pack, 20 minutes on and 10 minutes rest, for the first four hours after your appointment. This keeps the swelling down.
- Your bleeding has been determined to be controlled by the time we let you leave the office. This doesn't mean it has completely stopped and oozing or minor bleeding can be expected in the hours immediately after your appointment. We should have given you enough extra gauze to control any bleeding after you leave. If you run out, biting on a moist tea bag will do the trick. If you continue to bleed and are unable to get it to stop, call us or go to the emergency room if we're unavailable.
- Tooth sockets heal slowly from the bottom-up. It is important to keep the clot in place that plugs to top of the socket until your gums cover the area, which takes about one to two weeks. Some things to avoid so the clot stays in place:
 - Any sucking action like using a straw or smoking
 - Spitting forcefully
 - Consuming any hot or carbonated food or drink in the day following your procedure
- Tobacco use, in any form, causes delayed wound healing. Cigarette or cigar smoking is particularly risky because it creates a sucking action which could dislodge your clot in addition to delaying wound healing. Ideally, you should have avoided tobacco use six weeks prior to your appointment and for six weeks after. If you haven't, don't be alarmed. Just avoid tobacco use after your extraction for at least several days.
- Sometimes after extractions you may experience sharp spots and sores in the area. These are usually tiny bone splinters that are trying to come out. Just like splinters in your skin, they will eventually come out anywhere from a few days to weeks later. If they seem to be stuck or it just bothers you too much, come in and let us help you out.
- If you had a bone graft placed to preserve your jaw, you'll have some additional considerations. The bone graft is similar to sand, so little particles may come out of the socket. This is normal. If a membrane was placed, this should help keep the particles in place. You may see something white or yellow in the socket. Don't panic. This is the membrane and will be removed by the doctor once things have started to heal. Some membranes resorb by themselves. The doctor does not have to remove these.
- Bone grafts procedures often have slightly more discomfort during healing. This is because our bodies think it is foreign material at first, and tries to clean it up, causing inflammation. This will subside in one to two weeks.

Now, let's talk about replacing that tooth with something!

