



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR MINOR ORAL SURGERY AND EXTRACTIONS

You need to look after yourself carefully after you have had a tooth taken out or any dental surgery. Following these instructions will help minimise post-operative pain, swelling, tenderness and aid healing, as well as prevent infection.

- Do not rinse your mouth out for at **least 24 hours** after an extraction. This will help the blood to clot in the socket. It is this blood clot that will aid healing.
- **After 24 hours**, dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water. Take a sip, hold it in your mouth and spit out. The salt will help cleanse the area and limit the chance of infection. **DO NOT RINSE OR GARGLE**. Over-enthusiastic rinsing can dislodge the clot and slow healing. Do this as many times throughout the day as possible for 1 week. You may use a mouthwash after 3 days as an alternative to the salt water rinses.
- It is important to keep your mouth clean. Brush your teeth as normal but brush the area of treatment gently, taking particular care not to cause any bruising or bleeding.
- Avoid eating or drinking until the local anaesthesia has worn off. This will stop you from accidentally chewing or burning your cheeks. Avoid food and drinks that are very hot / cold / spicy / tough as the area will be sensitive.
- If you start to bleed again, do not worry. Roll a handkerchief into a sausage, place it over the bleeding socket and **bite HARD for 30 minutes**. Remember that blood will mix with saliva so the volume will appear greater.
- You may experience some pain, swelling and bruising after treatment. This will only be short-lived and will improve after three days. Take painkillers, such as **ibuprofen and/or paracetamol**, for the **first 24 hours** to help reduce the pain and swelling. Then take them as and when required. Avoid taking aspirin as it may cause bleeding. If you are asthmatic, avoid taking ibuprofen as it may worsen your asthma.
- Take it easy for the rest of the day; avoid demanding physical work or exercise. Also refrain from drinking alcohol for the first 24 hours, as this can encourage bleeding and delay healing.
- **Avoid smoking** for at least **48 hours** after treatment. Smoking reduces the rate of healing and increase the risk of infection, which can be very painful. Ask your pharmacist for alternatives such as nicotine patches.
- If you have any concerns, prolonged bleeding or pain, call the surgery on **01302 784608**.