

INSTRUCTIONS AFTER DENTAL EXTRACTION(S)

Immediately after the procedure

- Bite on gauze for 15-20 minutes. If there is still bleeding, you can replace with fresh gauze and again bite down for another 15-20 minutes.
- If your doctor specifically discusses using ice packs to reduce swelling, apply ice to the side of the face for 15-20 minutes every hour for today only.

What to expect today

- The extraction site may be uncomfortable over the next 24-72 hours. You can take extra-strength Tylenol™ or any prescription pain medication that may have been prescribed. You should avoid taking aspirin or ibuprofen products (such as Motrin™ or Advil™) since this may cause bleeding from the extraction site.
- You may experience some oozing from the extraction site. This may take the form of blood-tinged saliva in your mouth. If you notice active bleeding from the extraction site, use the sterile gauze given to you. Dampen 2-3 pieces of gauze, fold and apply with pressure against the site for 15-20 minutes. If this does not stop the bleeding take a tea-bag (black tea such as Lipton or Salada), dampen it in warm water, wring out the excess water and apply with pressure against the extraction site for 15-20 minutes.
- You may eat any food you desire, however avoid hot (temperature hot) foods today as well as sharp foods like toast, chips and popcorn, for your own comfort. Soft foods are preferable, and hydration is important. For the next 3-4 days, do not drink using a straw as this can disrupt the initial healing process.
- Brush your teeth normally but avoid the extraction site.
- Do not rinse today. Starting tomorrow, rinse your mouth gently with warm salt water after every meal. Rinses should be continued for one week until the soreness is gone, with the purpose of keeping your mouth as clean as possible in order to minimize the risk of infection.
- You should not smoke for at least 72 hours as this increases your chances of developing an infection.

Infection

- If antibiotics were prescribed, take until completed according to the instructions given to you. If you develop a rash or any other unusual symptoms, stop the medication and call the office. If antibiotics were not prescribed, and you notice increasing pain and/or swelling by the 4th or 5th day, it is possible that you may have an infection at the extraction site. If this happens, please call the clinic at 617-732-6974 to speak with your doctor.

Stitches

- If stitches were placed, you may feel a few threads around the extraction site. We use resorbable (“melting”) stitches and these will fall out within approximately 3-10 days.

In case of emergency

If you experience uncontrolled pain, uncontrolled bleeding, or if you think there is an infection, please contact the practice. During the day call 617-732-6974. In the evening and weekends, call the Brigham and Women's Hospital at 617-732-5500 and ask to have the Dental Resident on-call paged.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your doctor at the Division of Oral Medicine and Dentistry, at 617-732-6974.