

After Your Wisdom Tooth Extraction(s)

**Immediately Following Surgery:**

- The gauze pad placed over the surgical area should be kept in place for 15–20 minutes. After this time, the gauze pad should be removed and discarded. Replace as necessary if bleeding
- Place ice packs to the areas of your face where surgery was performed.
- Pick up your prescriptions from your pharmacy.
- Take the prescribed pain medications right away, with food, prior to the local anesthetic wearing off.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable. For the first 24–72 hours after surgery, do not:
  - Disturb the wound(s)
  - Use straws
  - Drink anything with carbonation
  - Vigorously rinse, swish, or spit
  - Smoke

**Bleeding** - Bleeding Some bleeding is expected after any surgical procedure and is a normal part of healing. You may have bleeding and/or redness in the saliva for 24–48 hours. Gauze will be provided to you to help control bleeding following your procedure. You will need to bite with firm pressure for 20–30 minutes. If bleeding continues, moisten a black tea bag with ice cold water and bite down for 20–30 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting the blood vessels. A small amount of bleeding can continue intermittently for a few days, especially if the area is stimulated by movement. If stitches were placed inside your mouth, they will dissolve on their own in 5–10 days. Any physical activity will raise your heart rate and increase bleeding, so minimize any exercise for a few days following surgery. After the blood clot forms, it is important not to disturb or dislodge the clot, as it aids healing

**Swelling** - Swelling is also a normal part of post-operative healing and can increase for 2–3 days following any surgery, slowly resolving after this. You may apply an ice pack to the area for 20 minutes at a time for the first 48 hours; this will help minimize pain and swelling during this time. After 48 hours, you may switch to warm, moist heat.

**Pain** - You should begin taking pain medication right after surgery, with food. For mild to moderate pain, alternate between ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®) and Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) every 3 hours. For severe pain, you may have been prescribed pain medication should be taken as directed with food. Do not take any of the above medications if you are allergic or have been instructed by your doctor not to do so.

**Antibiotics** - If you have been prescribed antibiotics (Amoxicillin or Clindamycin), you should begin taking them immediately after surgery with soft food. Please stop

antibiotic usage if you notice a rash or have difficulty breathing. This may be a sign you are allergic to the prescribed antibiotic.

**Diet** - Hydration and nutrition are important for healing following surgery. Initially, eat soft foods (eg. Soup, Pudding, macaroni, protein shakes, boost etc.. Remember to always eat prior to taking any pain medication to avoid nausea. Return to a normal diet as soon as possible unless otherwise directed. Avoid seeds, nuts, rice or anything that may get stuck in the tooth socket

**Oral Hygiene** - Good oral hygiene is essential to healing. Do not rinse your mouth for the first post-operative day or while there is bleeding. After 24–48 hours, use a warm water rinse following meals to flush out particles of food and debris that may lodge in the operated area. Continue brushing and flossing your teeth with a soft bristle brush. You may brush and floss your teeth the night of surgery; remember no vigorous swishing or spitting. You may brush and floss around the surgical site, just be gentle initially.

**Activity** - Keep physical activities to a minimum immediately following surgery. If you are considering exercise, throbbing and/or bleeding may occur. If this occurs, you should discontinue exercising. Keep in mind that you are probably not taking in normal nourishment, which may weaken you and further limit your ability to exercise. Limit any vigorous exercise for 24 hours after surgery, as this will increase blood pressure and may cause more bleeding from the extraction site

### **Other Complications**

- If numbness of the lip, chin, or tongue occurs there is no cause for alarm. As stated before surgery this is usually temporary in nature. You should be aware that if your lip or tongue is numb, you could bite it and not feel the sensation, so be careful.
- In some cases, discoloration of the skin follows swelling. The development of black, blue, green, or yellow discoloration is due to blood spreading beneath the tissues. This is a normal post-operative occurrence, which may occur 2–3 days postoperatively. Moist heat applied to the area may speed up the removal of the discoloration.
- Sutures may have been placed; if so, they will dissolve on their own in 4-6 days. Sometimes they become dislodged; this is no cause for alarm. Just remove the loose suture from your mouth and discard it.
- There will be a hole where the tooth was removed. The hole will gradually fill in with new tissue over the next month starting at the bottom of the socket. In the meantime, the area should be kept clean, especially after meals, with warm water rinses or a toothbrush.
- If you are currently taking birth control medication, there is a chance that the prescribed antibiotic medication may interfere with the efficacy of your oral contraceptive medication. Please discuss this further with your pharmacist.
- Your case is individual; no two mouths are alike. Do not accept well-intended advice from friends. Discuss your problem with the persons best able to effectively help you: our doctor or your family dentist.