



Neuromuscular & Aesthetic Dentistry

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## *Home care following an extraction*

The problems you can expect following an extraction will vary with the condition of the tooth prior to removal, the difficulty of the procedure and the care you take of the wound after you get home.

Following a few simple steps are some of the most important things you can do for yourself following an extraction.

### **Bleeding:**

Keep biting pressure on the gauze we placed for 20 to 30 minutes to control bleeding. Remove the gauze. If there is still bleeding, fold a piece of sterile gauze into a pad, place it over the extraction site and keep biting pressure on it for another 20 to 30 minutes. Repeat this until the bleeding has stopped. It is normal to have pink colored saliva and even taste blood for a while after an extraction. If the site is still bleeding after about two hours of constant pressure, please call our office.

### **Discomfort:**

Over the counter pain relievers will usually be adequate to control any discomfort. Take two tablets every 3 to 5 hours if needed. It usually takes about an hour for a pain medication to work so take your first dose while you are still numb from the anesthetic. If stronger medications are needed, they will be prescribed for you.

### **Cool Water Soaks:**

Cool water soaks will help with bleeding and discomfort the **Day of** the extraction. Do not swish the water through the area, let it soak.

### **Warm Salt Water Soaks:**

Beginning the **day after** the extraction, mix **1 teaspoon of salt into a cup of warm water** and hold it in the extraction area until the temperature changes, then spit it out gently. Do this 3 to 4 times a day for three days.

### **No Rinsing or Spitting:**

It is important not to vigorously rinse or forcibly spit during the healing period. Your extraction site needs to be protected by the blood clot that forms naturally. Rinsing and/or spitting can disturb the blood clot which can potentially cause a dry socket. As a dry socket can be painful you will want to be careful as to not disturb the blood clot.

### **It is important to avoid the following as they can all cause a painful dry socket:**

- Smoking
- Drinking through a straw
- Picking at or brushing the extraction site
- Alcohol

**Avoid hard foods:** Foods like peanuts and popcorn could get hard particles into the socket.