After your Surgical Extraction

Well done! That's your procedure finished.

Key points to remember

- Take it easy for a few hours, but you do not need to lie down
- Strenuous exercise is best avoided for the next 48 hours
- Do not vigorously rinse your mouth for 24 hours
- Avoid hot liquids, alcoholic drinks, and smoking
- Avoid hard or chewy foods for the rest of today
- Eat on the other side if possible
- Brush your teeth as normal, but be gentle around the extraction site

Be careful until your local anaesthetic wears off

Local anaesthetic tends to last for two to four hours, so take care not to accidentally damage your tongue or lip. It is usually best to wait until you have full feeling back before you try to eat or have a hot drink because you don't want to bite or scald yourself.

Pain Relief – Take ibuprofen and/or paracetamol

Occasionally, you might experience some pain or discomfort following an extraction. If it is safe for you to do so, we advise that you take an anti-inflammatory painkiller such as ibuprofen at your earliest convenience, preferably before the anaesthetic wears off which is typically within two to three hours. Paracetamol is a good alternative if you can't take ibuprofen. If you experience significant pain, then you can alternate the maximum doses of ibuprofen and paracetamol every two hours. Always read the instructions on the packaging and never exceed the maximum daily dosage.

Bleeding – Apply pressure from a gauze swab

Blood-stained saliva is to be expected for a day or two, so don't worry about that. However, if you get fresh blood pouring into your mouth then you will need to stop the bleeding. Make a compress by folding the gauze that you were given at your appointment and apply it to the affected area. Bite firmly onto the compress for at least ten minutes, avoiding the temptation to remove it and the prolonged pressure should stop the bleeding. If fresh blood appears, then repeat the process as necessary. In the unlikely event that a stable clot does not form after this, then you will need to come back to see us.

Bruising and swelling – Place an ice pack on your face

Minor swelling and bruising on your face and gums may appear the day after surgery. If it bothers you, you can place an ice pack on your face, closest to the area most affected. Keep it in place for 15-20 minutes at a time.

Tomorrow – Hot salty mouth rinses

Once the risk of bleeding has subsided and healing is underway, it is best to keep your mouth as clean as possible by rinsing with hot salty water after meals. Fill a mug with hot water from the kettle and add a teaspoonful of salt. Take a mouthful and swish it around the extraction site until the water becomes cool. Spit out and repeat. There is no upper limit to how often you can do this, other than it is time consuming and tastes unpleasant, but each time will help the healing process. Continue to brush and floss your teeth as normal, taking care not to traumatise the area.

Sutures – They will dissolve on their own

If you have had any sutures placed, we will let you know. The sutures are dissolvable but often remain for around two to three weeks. If they are uncomfortable or annoying, you may contact us to remove them for you.

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