

## Post-Operative Instructions for a Surgical Extraction

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After your tooth has been surgically removed, it is important to follow these care instructions to ensure the area heals properly.



Immediately after your procedure, it's important to listen and adhere to your doctor's recovery instructions for the type of anesthetic used. Also, it's best to limit your physical activity for the first 24 hours.



For the first hour after surgery, gently bite down on the gauze that was placed over the surgical site.



If bleeding continues after one hour, place fresh sterile gauze over the site and reapply pressure for another 30 minutes.



Be careful not to rinse vigorously for at least the first 24 hours after surgery, as this may prolong bleeding. Be sure to drink lots of water, but don't use a straw for at least 48 hours after the procedure, as it could dislodge the blood clot that forms during the healing process.



Also, don't smoke for at least a week, as this too can dislodge the blood clot and hinder healing.



When a blood clot is prematurely dislodged it can cause a condition called dry socket. Dry socket causes severe discomfort that worsens a few days after surgery. If you experience any common dry socket symptoms like an awful taste in your mouth, bad breath or intense pain, contact your doctor right away.



It's normal to experience some discomfort in the first few days following a surgical extraction and it's common to have minor bleeding for the first day. You can take an over-the-counter pain reliever, like Ibuprofen, or a prescribed medication to help with any discomfort.



If stitches were used, they will dissolve on their own. If non-dissolvable stitches were used, your doctor will remove them during a follow-up visit.



Swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes, and side of the face is common and may peak two or three days after surgery.



Ice packs can be used to help with pain and swelling and you can gently rinse with warm salt water three times per day.



Propping up your head with pillows when lying down will aid both swelling and bleeding.



Eat soft foods for the first few days and avoid hard and crunchy foods for one week. Make sure to avoid hot, carbonated, or alcoholic beverages as well as spicy foods which can irritate the surgical site.



Begin brushing and flossing your teeth the day after surgery, but clean gently around the surgical site.



If you experience signs of infection such as fever, redness and swelling or if you develop a bad taste or odor in your mouth, it is important to contact your doctor's office for assistance.