

Houston Methodist Oral and Maxillofacial Surgical Associates

Instructions Following Dental Extractions

Will I have pain?

A certain amount of pain following the removal of teeth is not uncommon. If no prescription for pain medicine is given, you may use over-the-counter pain medicine such as Tylenol®. Do not use aspirin products. If pain medication was prescribed, please follow the doctor's instructions.

What if there is bleeding?

A small amount of bleeding is to be expected following tooth extractions. Oozing may continue 24-to-48 hours. If a lot of bleeding occurs, remove any large liver-like clots, then place a piece of folded gauze over the bleeding area and bite down firmly for 20 minutes. The gauze pack must be thick enough so you can press when biting down. Repeat this procedure if necessary. Biting pressure on a wet tea bag may be effective in stopping bleeding. If bleeding happens, avoid hot liquids, stop mouth rinse, sit upright and stop exercise.

Will I see swelling?

Following extractions, swelling and sometimes bruising can be expected. Normally, swelling will reach its peak on the third day after surgery, then go away. To help swelling go down, ice packs should be put on your face where the swelling is for 20-to-30 minutes each hour for the first 24 hours, then five to 10 minutes each hour for the next day if swelling is extreme. After two days, stop the ice.

Can I use mouthwash?

Vigorous mouth washing may cause bleeding if clots are not formed. Therefore do not rinse your mouth for at least 24 hours following extractions. You may then gently rinse your mouth with warm saltwater solution (1/2 teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water) and/or a mouthwash. If bleeding continues, stop all mouth rinsing and bite on folded gauze.

What can I eat?

Your diet should be light, smooth foods (soups, custards, junior baby foods, egg nogs, gelatin, etc.) until healing has gotten to the point where more coarse foods can be chewed. Dietary supplements such as Ensure®, Sustacal® or Boost® may be helpful to maintain daily dietary requirements. Drink six-to-eight glasses of water daily. Maintain normal bowel movements. A mild laxative is recommended, if necessary.

What should I do if I am having problems?

Please call our office at **713.441.5577**. After hours, our answering service will contact the doctor on call and he or she will contact you. In case of an emergency, please come to Houston Methodist's emergency room.

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