

Post-operative Instructions: Tooth Extraction

- **Right After Surgery**
 - Please do not smoke after surgery! It delays wound healing. Smoking increases the risk that you develop a painful “dry socket” and or do not heal well. Alcohol consumption should be minimized, especially if you are taking Tylenol/acetaminophen as part of your pain control regimen.
 - Cold packs applied to face with steady pressure will decrease swelling and pain. Apply 15 min on, 15 min off.
 - Rest and light exercise are good but avoid heavy exertion and keep your head elevated to minimize bleeding and swelling.
 - If stitches were placed, it is very tempting to play with suture tails with your tongue. Leave the stitches alone so they do not fall out too early.
- **Medications**
 - To manage pain & swelling take ibuprofen 600mg + 500mg acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4-5hr, unless you have a medical reason you cannot take NSAIDs.
 - If you were prescribed a rescue opioid, take as needed without changing the Tylenol/ibuprofen regimen.
 - Maximum daily dose: Do NOT exceed total of 3,200 mg Tylenol or Ibuprofen per 24hr to avoid organ damage.
 - In some cases, Dr. Tullis has placed either a collagen sponge or a bone graft in the tooth socket. Both techniques help control bleeding and prevent dry socket. A bone graft helps prepare the site for a future dental implant by reducing jawbone shrinkage that would otherwise occur during natural healing.
- **Diet**
 - Soft foods - Avoid hard or crunchy foods (popcorn, chips, cereal, candy, seeds, nuts, etc.).
 - Balanced nutrition is important for good recovery. What can you eat?
 - Smoothies, soups, oatmeal, yogurt, eggs, tofu, soft meatloaf, soft noodles, mashed potatoes, hummus, cottage cheese, boneless/soft fish, avocado, bananas, applesauce, soft ice cream, etc.
 - Stay hydrated after surgery. Avoid very hot liquids. Warm is OK. Avoid sucking through a straw the first 5 days.
- **Oral Hygiene**
 - Continue to brush and clean between the teeth but avoid the surgical area until your follow-up appointment.
 - Gently swish with the chlorhexidine rinse for 30-60 sec AFTER brushing, then spit. Then don't eat for at least 30 min.
 - Please continue your professional maintenance program uninterrupted. Your hygienist will be careful with the surgical site. The rest of your mouth still needs the regular professional cleanings.
- **You May Experience**
 - Minor bleeding that gives saliva reddish color. You may want to cover your pillow with a towel the first night. A little bleeding is normal. It normally stops when you fold a wet gauze or wet paper towel in between the teeth and bite down to hold steady pressure. A wet tea bag (black) held against the bleeding site can also help a clot to form. Call Dr. Tullis if you have heavy bleeding that does not stop after holding pressure.
 - Swelling is normal but should decrease after a few days. Bruising on your chin or face may occur.

For further questions, call Dr. Tullis at (719) 475-9023 (business hrs). Your take-home packet has Dr. Tullis' cell number in case of emergencies.