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Post-Op Instructions after Tooth Extraction

- After tooth extraction, it is important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. It is recommended that you firmly bite on a gauze pad for 30 to 45 minutes following the procedure. You should change the gauze every 15 minutes.
- After the blood clot forms, it is important not to disturb or dislodge the clot, especially for the first 24 hours. **Do not** smoke, drink through a straw, rinse vigorously, or brush near the extraction site for one to two days.
- Reduce exercise for the first 24 hours. This will keep blood pressure lower, which will reduce bleeding from the extraction site.
- To reduce swelling, place an ice pack or an unopened bag of frozen peas to the area for 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off. Swelling usually should subside after 48 hours.
- To minimize pain, take medications such as Tylenol, Advil, or Motrin. In some cases, prescription pain medications may be prescribed. Please take only as directed and do not drive or operate machinery if taking narcotic medications. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length(of time even if signs and symptoms of infection are gone.
- After 24 hours, you may gently rinse your mouth with salt water three times a day, one teaspoon of salt in one cup of warm water (rinse-swish-spit). Rinsing after meals will help in preventing food from accumulating in the extraction site.
- Drink lots of fluids and eat soft foods on the opposite side of the extraction site. Avoid alcoholic beverages and hot or spicy foods. You may resume normal eating as soon as you are comfortable.
- If sutures (stitches) were placed, please be sure to keep your follow-up appointment for removal.
- **Contact** the office immediately if you have heavy uncontrolled bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling after two to three days, or a reaction to the medications prescribed at **(847) 426-3000**.

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