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Post-Operative Instructions

DO NOT DISTURB THE AREA: For the next 24 hours, it is very important to allow your body to form a good blood clot at the tooth extraction site, this will start the natural healing process. Spitting, sucking, and smoking can all dislodge the blood clot. Keep anything sharp from entering the extraction site (crunchy food, toothpicks, toothbrush). Be sure to chew on the opposite side for 24 hours.

BLEEDING: When you leave the office, you will be biting on gauze to stop the bleeding and help form a blood clot at the extraction socket. Keep pressure on this gauze for at least 1 hour. Do not change it during this time as it should remain undisturbed while a clot forms at the extraction site. After 1 hour, you may remove the gauze. You may bite on another gauze or moist tea bag for 30 minute increments if you believe bleeding is still present. Small amounts of blood in the saliva can make your saliva appear quite red. This is normal and may be noticed the rest of the day after the procedure.

SMOKING: Smoking should be stopped immediately following tooth extraction. Healing and success of the surgery will be significantly reduced by the smoking. The suction created when smoking can dislodge the blood clot. This will cause delay in healing and painful dry socket.

PAIN: Dr. Patel will most likely prescribe you pain medication after a tooth extraction. Take it before the anesthesia wears off. Take it as instructed on the label by Dr. Patel. Do not exceed the dose on the label. Taking pain medication with food will help reduce upset stomach. Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery when taking pain medication. Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications.

NAUSEA: This is most often caused by taking pain medications on an empty stomach. Nausea can be reduced by taking pain medication with soft foods and plenty of water.

SWELLING: Applying an ice bag to the face over the operated area will minimize swelling. Apply for 20 minutes, then remove for 20 minutes. Continue this for the first day.

NUMBNESS: The local anesthetic will cause you to be numb for several hours after you leave the office. Be very careful not to bite, chew, or scratch the numb area. Sometimes the extraction causes residual numbness or tingling for six weeks or longer.

BRUSHING: Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours after surgery. After this, you may brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of surgery for 2 days.

RINSING: Avoid all rinsing or swishing for 24 hours after extraction. Rinsing can disturb the formation of a healing blood clot which is essential to proper healing. This could cause bleeding and risk of dry socket.

After 24 hours, you may begin gentle rinsing with a saltwater solution (1 tsp salt and 12 oz warm water). Avoid mouth rinses with alcohol.

DIET: Eat soft foods for the first two days. Maintain a healthy, balanced diet. Return to normal regular meals as soon as possible after the first two days. Drink plenty of water. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours.

ACTIVITY: After leaving the office, rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day. Keeping a lower blood pressure will reduce bleeding and aid healing.

ANTIBIOTICS: If you were prescribed antibiotics, take all of them as directed until they are gone.

SINUS: If your sinus was involved during the procedure, you should avoid blowing your nose, whistling, or sneezing for one week. A prescription for antibiotics and nasal decongestant will most likely be recommended.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS: You may need to return to the office for removal of stitches, or just for a brief post-surgical follow up examination.

Please call us if you have:

- uncontrollable pain
- excessive or severe bleeding
- marked fever
- excessive warm swelling occurring a few days after the procedure
- reactions to medications, especially rash, itching, or breathing problems

These instructions were created by dental professionals to help increase your outcome of healing and reduce post-surgical complications. Following them is in your best interest. If you have any questions that weren't answered during your appointment or in the instructions, please call us.