



## Tooth Extraction Aftercare Tips

Your dentist will likely provide you with aftercare instructions which may include:

- **Pain relievers.** Be sure to take your pain relievers as prescribed by your dentist. This should help lessen the pain that follows an extraction.
- **Do not remove the gauze pad.** Your gauze pad should be kept in place for up to four hours following your extraction.
- **Use an ice pack.** Ice packs can help relieve some of the pain as well as reduce swelling. To avoid tissue damage, most dentists recommend a "10 minutes on, 10 minutes off" application of ice packs.
- **Take it easy for the first 24 hours.** Do not exercise or partake in activities which could cause the blood clot to become dislodged.
- **Do not spit, rinse your mouth, smoke, or use a straw for the first 24 hours.** Any type of suction action in the mouth can cause the blood clot to become dislodged.
- **Salt water rinses.** After 24 hours following your procedure you may begin to use a salt water rinse. The solution should contain a half-teaspoon of salt to eight (8) ounces of water.
- **Keep your head raised while sleeping.** Adding an extra pillow under your head while sleeping will help with the healing process.
- **Continue to brush and floss.** You should maintain oral health care during the healing period, although try to avoid coming into contact with the blood clot.

### Recommended Foods After an Extraction

Following your extraction, you will be encouraged to eat only soft foods, which may include:

- Applesauce
- Pudding
- Soups
- Yogurt

If you are unable to fulfill your nutritional goals with soft foods you may also use meal replacement drinks such as Ensure®.

### When Can I Resume My Normal Diet?

You may resume eating your regular diet within one to two weeks following your extraction. Try to chew on the side opposite of the extraction site.

### What if the Pain Lasts More than 3 Days?

If you continue to experience pain (or the pain increases) three to four days following the extraction, reach out to your dentist.