



## Post-Operative Instructions for Dental Extractions

**Bleeding:** Some post-operative bleeding is common from the extraction site. However this small amount of bleeding may mix with saliva and appear to be more severe. Holding lightly damp gauze squares on the extraction site for 20-30 minutes at a time will help stop any bleeding. Dipping a tea bag in lukewarm water and holding it in the area of the extraction may also stop potential or more severe bleeding.

**Swelling:** Ice placed externally to the extraction site for 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off, for a few hours, will help control localized swelling.

**Pain:** Some post-operative pain is to be expected after the extraction. The use of over-the-counter medications like Tylenol (Acetaminophen), Advil or Motrin (Ibuprofen), Aleve (Naproxen Sodium) or other OTC medications is advised. In the case of a more complicated extraction, Dr. Carter may provide a written prescription for a stronger medication.

**Mouthwash:** Do not rinse with a bottled mouthwash for 48-72 hours after extractions. Mouthwashes contain high levels of alcohol and may interfere with the clotting process and be very uncomfortable to rinse with. You may begin using warm saltwater rinses the day following the extraction. The recipe I use is: ½ to 1 teaspoon salt to about 8 ounces of water.

**Food & Drink:** Do NOT drink through a straw for 72 hours after an extraction, as this may cause a dry socket. Also, you may want to eat softer foods for 24-72 hours post-op. Avoiding "sharp" foods like tortilla chips with corners and "hot and spicy" foods like hot wings is recommended for a few days.

**Exercise:** Know your body...exercise that may increase your blood pressure should to be avoided immediately after an extraction. Workouts can generally be resumed fairly quickly for most patients, though.

**Smoking:** Smoking is NOT recommended for 72 hours after an extraction. Smoking severely hampers blood clotting and healing and may lead to a very painful condition called a dry socket!

**Please feel free to call our office at 812-944-5155 or Dr. Carter's cell at 502-649-1932 with questions or complications.**