

## **EXTRACTION POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Keep pressure on the extraction site by biting gently on folded gauze. Remove the gauze only when it becomes damp with saliva and/or blood, approximately 30 minutes. Replace with fresh gauze and repeat. There should be less blood on each gauze change. Continue replacing gauze until the bleeding has stopped.
2. If the gauze is continuously being saturated in blood, you may use a tea bag to staunch the bleeding. Wet the tea bag, squeeze out the excess water, and then place it in the area of the extraction site. Let it remain in place for 30 minutes. Remove the tea bag, check the bleeding and if needed use the gauze as instructed above.
3. Place an icepack on the area outside of the mouth where the extraction was performed. Leave the icepack (wrapped in towel) on the site for 20 minutes. Remove the icepack for 40 minutes. Repeat several times throughout the day to prevent and/or alleviate swelling.
4. AFTER 24 HOURS, begin rinsing with warm salt water. (Use eight ounces of water to one teaspoon of salt). Do this several times daily (4-6) for 3 to 5 days after the procedure--not including the 24 hour wait.
5. Drink enough fluids to keep the body hydrated.
6. Eat soft foods that will not irritate the extraction site. Mashed potatoes, gelatin, ice cream, warm (not hot) soups are all good choices. Avoid crunchy and spicy foods. Chew on the opposite side of the extraction site when possible.

### **Don't:**

1. Do not rinse or spit for the first 24 hours after the extraction.
2. Do not drink from a bottle or straw for the first week.
3. Do not smoke for the first 24 hours. Smoking increases the chance of a "dry socket".
4. Do not exert yourself. No heavy lifting, running or vigorous exercise for the first 24 hours.
5. Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours as it may dissolve the blood clot that forms in the extraction site.

**Please note that it is common to experience the most discomfort on the *third day* after the extraction(s). The body uses inflammation as a natural healing process and any accompanying discomfort/pain does not necessarily mean anything is abnormal. However, a "dry socket" does usually need to be treated. See below for information on what a dry socket is.**

**WHAT IS A "DRY SOCKET"?** A dry socket --alveolar osteitis-- is an extremely painful dental condition that can occur after extraction of a permanent adult tooth. Dry socket occurs when the blood clot at the site of the tooth extraction has been dislodged or has dissolved before the wound has healed. Exposure

of the underlying bone and nerves results in severe pain. Dry socket is the most common complaint following tooth extractions, such as the removal of impacted wisdom teeth. If dry socket occurs, the pain usually begins one to three days after the extraction.