

# POST-EXTRACTION HOME CARE

- *Anesthetics will be administered at the dentist office before the procedure, and the mouth will remain numb for a while varying on the type of anesthetic received. Be careful not to bite your cheek, lip or tongue while numb. The numbness will subside in a few hours and a pain medication may be given for you to take while recuperating at home. The trick is to not let the pain get ahead of you. Take your medication as directed on a regular basis to avoid a painful recovery. **If no pain medication was prescribed, you may try taking 600 mg of Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) every 6 hours unless your medical history dictates otherwise.** Medication may also be given to prevent infection.*
- *You will be given a **gauze pack to place on the extraction site for 45 minutes** to help control bleeding and help the blood clot to form. Do not chew or suck on the gauze. If you have oozing or bleeding after the pack is removed, apply new gauze. Fold the gauze into a square and place on extraction site. Apply pressure by closing the teeth firmly over the pad for 30 minutes. Apply a moistened tea bag in place of the gauze if bleeding does not readily stop. If heavy bleeding occurs, call your dentist.*
- *After the extraction, a blood clot forms in the socket. **Limit strenuous activity for 24 hours** to decrease bleeding. This is an important part of the healing process. **Avoid activities that may disturb the clot such as smoking, rinsing the mouth too vigorously or sucking through a straw.** You don't want to dislodge the clot and delay healing (dry socket) so be careful cleaning your teeth near the extraction site. Brush the other teeth thoroughly and rinse lightly. This will help with the unpleasant odor or taste associated with extractions.*
- *After an extraction, pain and swelling, even bruising, are normal. Take your pain medication and **apply cold compresses as soon as possible to the outside of your face** at the point of swelling. Use store bought cold packs or make your own by placing ice cubes into a plastic bag and wrapping it around the area with a hand towel. The general rule is **20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for 3 to 5 hours after the procedure.***
- *Drink lots of cold, nutritious fluids. Avoid alcoholic drinks, hot or spicy foods or hot drinks. Try soft foods in the days that follow and try to chew on the opposite side of the mouth having the extraction. If extractions were on both sides of the mouth - as is common with wisdom teeth - just chew extra gently. Rinse your mouth after eating – only very gently on the first day.*
- ***Rinse with warm salt water several times per day after the first 24 hours.** Use half a teaspoon salt in 8 oz. of water. This is important to keep food particles from settling in the socket causing infection. Salt water also helps the tissue heal faster and feel better sooner.*
- *Bony spicules may surface or come loose following an extraction. See your dentist if this does not resolve itself.*
- *Your dentist will tell you if you need to return for a follow-up or suture removal.*
- *Please call if you have questions or concerns: 973-663-4444*