

## ***Instructions for Self-Care following Tooth Extraction***

After tooth extraction, it's important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. Bite on a gauze pad for 30-45 minutes immediately after the appointment. If the bleeding or oozing still persists, place another gauze pad and bite firmly for another 30 minutes. You may have to do this several times to stop the flow of blood.

After the blood clot forms, it is important to not disturb or dislodge the clot. **Do not rinse vigorously, suck on straws, smoke, drink alcohol, or brush teeth next to the extraction site for 72 hours.** These activities may dislodge or dissolve the clot and hinder the healing process. Limit vigorous exercise for the next 24 hours, as this increases blood pressure and may cause more bleeding from the extraction site.

After the tooth is extracted, you may feel some pain and experience some swelling. An ice pack applied to the area will keep swelling to a minimum. Take pain medications as prescribed. The swelling usually peaks after 2 to 3 days and then gradually subsides.

**Use pain medication as directed.** Call our office if the medication doesn't seem to be working. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time even if signs and symptoms of infection are gone. Drink lots of fluids and eat nutritious, soft food on the day of the extraction. You can eat normally as soon as you are comfortable.

It is important to resume your normal dental routine after 24 hours. This should include brushing and flossing your teeth at least once a day. This will speed healing and help keep your mouth fresh and clean.

After a few days, you should feel fine and ready to resume your normal activities. If you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling for 2 to 3 days, or a reaction to the medication, call our office immediately at 720-588-2505.