

After Wisdom Tooth Removal

The removal of impacted teeth is an invasive surgical procedure. Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if instructions are followed carefully.

Immediately following surgery, the gauze pad placed over the surgical area should remain in place. Then, change out the gauze as needed until the bleeding stops. Once the bleeding stops, the gauze can be removed and discarded. Vigorous mouth rinsing should be avoided. Do not touch the wound area. This may cause additional bleeding.

A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected. Slight bleeding, oozing or redness in the saliva is not uncommon. Excessive bleeding may be controlled by wiping and rinsing any old clots from the wound. Place a fresh gauze pad over the area and bite down for 30 minutes. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for 30 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting blood vessels. To minimize further bleeding, do not become excited or sit upright, and avoid exercise. Contact your surgeon's office if bleeding does not subside.

Swelling is to be expected around the mouth, cheeks, eyes and/or sides of your face. The swelling will not be evident until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until two or three days post-operative. Swelling may be minimized by the use of ice packs.

Take the prescribed pain medications as soon as you begin to feel discomfort which will likely occur as the local anesthetic wears off. For moderate pain, you may take one or two acetaminophen such as Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol. Ibuprofen, such Advil or Motrin may be taken instead of acetaminophen. Two to three tablets may be taken every three to four hours as needed for pain. For severe pain, prescribed medication should be taken as advised.

Oral hygiene is essential to good healing. Clean your mouth thoroughly after each meal beginning the day after surgery. Brush your teeth to your best ability. Rinse with a warm salt water solution six times a day. (Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt in one cup of warm water.) Continue this procedure until the healing is complete.

Restrict your activities on the day of your surgery. Exercise may cause throbbing or bleeding to occur. You may be light-headed due to restricted intake of food. Do not exercise if this occurs. You may resume normal activity when you are comfortable.