

Post-operative Instructions

- Bite firmly on gauze for 30-40 minutes. Talking should be kept to a minimum for 3-4 hours. Expect some oozing for 24 hours after surgery. If your gauze becomes soaked through, change the gauze and bite firmly for about 1 hour, or until bleeding subsides.
- Expect some discomfort after oral surgery. This discomfort may last several days. Take the first dose of pain medication **before** anesthesia wears off. Continue taking the medication at the prescribed intervals to prevent excessive discomfort. Medication is for **management** of post-operative pain, not for elimination of all soreness.
- **Do not smoke, spit, suck through a straw for the first 12 hours after an extraction. No strenuous exercise for the first 12-24 hours after an extraction.**
- Eat cool, soft foods for the first 24 hours, then whatever you can tolerate. A warm salt water rinse after the first 24 hours helps with discomfort. An ice pack applied 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off will minimize swelling.
- If you take oral contraceptives, be advised that their effectiveness may be altered by antibiotic use. Oral contraceptives are also associated with increased incidence of dry socket.
- If you experience prolonged bleeding, bright red bleeding or large clots, call our emergency number at 703-309-4557.
- If the level of post-operative discomfort *increases* after the 3rd day, call our emergency number at 703-309-4557.
- A post-operative visit is usually scheduled 1 week after surgery.

Patient Initials