

# LifeLong Family Dentistry

## Extraction Post – Op Instructions

- 1. Form a Good Clot:** You left the office biting on gauze to form a blood clot in the extraction site. Bite on the gauze for 30 – 40 minutes. This is the start of healing. When the gauze is removed a little trickling or oozing from the extraction site for the first 24 hours is normal, so expect a red tint to your saliva or a little bit of a bloody taste. If the gauze is removed and a constant flow of blood or clots are being produced, bite firmly on a new gauze pack (you should have received extra gauze from the assistant) for 45 minutes. If bleeding persists after the second gauze pack, contact Dr. Long.
- 2. Protect Your New Clot:** The blood clot is vital to healing so care must be taken to avoid dislodging it. **Smoking, Rinsing Vigorously, Drinking from a Straw, Bottle or Can or any other activity that creates suction must be avoided for the next three (3) days.** These activities could cause the blood clot to be lost prematurely. If that were to happen you will not start bleeding because the vessels leading into the area have shut down. You will, however, develop a “Dry Socket” that can be very painful.
- 3. Modify Your Diet:** You need to protect those healing tissues. For the next few days minor modifications to your diet are necessary. First, avoid hard, crunchy foods such as chips, pretzels, and crusts. Second, avoid spicy foods. Third, alcohol must be avoided. Remember, mouth washes such as Scope and Listerine are about 25% alcohol and will delay healing. A good substitute is a teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water rinsed very gently to sooth the extraction site.
- 4. Keep Your Mouth Clean:** Resume your normal brushing and flossing routine within 24 hours. Include the area directly around your extraction site (if there are still adjacent teeth). Be gentle and do not brush directly over the tooth socket. The cleaner you keep your mouth the better you will heal.
- 5. Pain Management:** It is best to use a three pronged approach to pain mamageent:
  - a. Pain Medication:** The first choice is always over the counter medication such as Motrin (Ibuprophen), Tylenol (Acetominophen), or aspirin. The first dose of these medications should be taken when the first gauze pack is removed, before your local anesthetic wears off. For the first day pain medication should be repeated every 4 to 6 hours to avoid prolonged discomfort. After 24 hours medication should only be taken if needed. Only after non-narcotic medications have proven less than effective will narcotics be considered.
  - b. Ice Packs:** The application of ice to the effected site 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the first few hours can greatly reduce inflammation (pain and swelling). A bag of frozen corn or peas makes a great ice pack, but do not cook the vegetables after they have gone through freezing and thawing cycles.
  - c. Warm Salt Water Rinses:** A teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water makes the perfect post-op rinse. Gentley rinse or hold the salt solution over the extraction site several times a day for the first 2 to 3 days to help soothe and cleanse the area.
- 6. Monitor Your Progress:** Any pain you experience will peak after 24 hours and then should begin to improve. If you condition is getting worse instead of better, please contact Dr. Long for further instructions.