CENTRAL DENTAL GROUP

Instructions Following Tooth Extraction

Tooth extraction is considered a minor surgical procedure. Therefore, it is natural that temporary changes will occur in the mouth afterward. You will be functioning normally in just a few days. In the meantime, you should just follow a few simple instructions to promote healing, prevent complications, and make yourself comfortable.

1. **Bleeding**
   A gauze pack has been placed on the extraction site to limit the bleeding and confine the blood while clotting takes place. Leave the pack in place for 30 to 45 minutes. If you still have some bleeding or oozing after the pack is removed follow this procedure:
   *Fold up a piece of gauze, dampen the pad, and place it on the extraction site.
   *Apply moderate pressure by biting firmly on the pad for about 30 minutes. If pad becomes soaked replace it with a clean one as necessary.
   It is normal that a small amount of blood will leave the extraction site until a clot has formed. However, if heavy bleeding continues call our office immediately. Remember though, that a lot of saliva and a little blood can look like a lot of bleeding. **After an extraction, a blood clot forms in the tooth socket. This is an important part of the healing process. You should therefore avoid activities that might disturb the clotting.**
   *Do **not** smoke during the healing period.
   *Do **not** rinse your mouth vigorously or drink through a straw the first 24 hours.
   *Sutures may have been placed; usually these will dissolve after about a week or two. Do not play with or pick at the sutures, as they are placed to protect the socket.

2. **Swelling and pain**
   You may have some discomfort and notice some swelling. You can help reduce this by applying cold compresses or an icepack to the face. If you have prolonged or severe pain, swelling or fever, call our office.

3. **Medication**
   If you have been given a prescription medication for pain and infection control, please use it only as directed. If the medication does not seem to work for you, do not increase the dosage. Call the office. If you have a reaction to the medication, call the office.

4. **Diet**
   Drink lots of fluids (non-alcoholic), take your vitamins and eat soft nutritious foods. For the first few days try to chew on the opposite side.

5. **Rinsing**

The day after the extraction, gently start rinsing your mouth with warm salt-water rinses. (Half-teaspoon salt in 8 oz. glass of warm water). Rinsing after meals is especially important to keep food out of the extraction site. Avoid using a mouthwash during this early healing period.

6. **Oral Hygiene**
   It is important to continue to brush and floss your teeth. However, avoid cleaning the teeth right next to the extraction site. The tongue should also be brushed as this will help eliminate the bad breath and unpleasant taste that is common after extractions.