

## Your Tooth Extraction / Surgery After-Care Guide

Hi there! We want to make sure you heal up quickly and comfortably. Please follow these simple instructions carefully, and remember, they are designed to protect the blood clot that is forming in your mouth—this clot is your body's natural bandage!

### **Immediately After (The First 24 Hours)**

**Bite Down on the Gauze** for 45 minutes. This firm, steady pressure stops the bleeding and helps a strong blood clot form in the empty socket.

**Change the Gauze** and bite for another 30 minutes if you're still bleeding heavily. Sometimes the first clot needs a little more help! Keep the pressure constant until the bleeding slows to a pinkish ooze.

**Use an Ice Pack** on your cheek: 20 minutes, 20 minutes off. Cold is your best friend right now! It significantly reduces swelling and pain for the first day.

**Take Your Medicine** as prescribed for pain or infection. Don't wait for the pain to get bad! Taking medication on schedule keeps you comfortable and prevents infection.

**Sleep Elevated** on the side *opposite* the extraction. Use an extra pillow while resting or sleeping. Keeping your head higher than your body helps reduce swelling and controls bleeding overnight.

**Drink Lots of Cool Fluids** ( water juices, non carbonated/ non alcoholic *directly from a cup*).

Staying hydrated is key to a good recovery, but be very gentle when you drink. **AVOID straws**—the sucking motion creates negative pressure that can pull your blood clot out!

### **Do Not Rinse, Swish, Spit, or Use a Straw!**

The sucking motion (from a straw or spitting) or the force of swishing can pull the life-saving blood clot out of the socket, leading to a painful condition called a **dry socket**.

### **Do Not Smoke!** Avoid for at least **5 days**.

Smoking severely slows healing and is the biggest cause of a dry socket. The sucking motion also dislodges the clot.

### **No Strenuous Activity or Heavy Exercise** for 3–4 days.

Physical activity raises your blood pressure and heart rate, which can cause the extraction site to start bleeding again.

### **Do Not Touch the Socket** with your fingers or tongue.

This can introduce germs and easily dislodge the protective blood clot.

**Start Gentle Salt Water Rinses** after every meal for 1 week. (Use 1/2 tsp of salt in a glass of warm water).

Brush and floss carefully, avoiding the surgical area.

Now that the clot is secure, the rinse gently cleans the socket and keeps the area free of food particles to prevent infection, but you must avoid disturbing the healing clot.

**Use Prescribed Mouthrinse** following the specific instructions.

This special rinse helps keep the area clean and fight bacteria, promoting better healing.

**Apply a Warm Compress** ( after 48 hours,with a warm moist towel) to your jaw if it feels stiff

Once the initial swelling has peaked, warmth can increase blood flow to the area, which helps carry away swelling and stiffness, helps to relax your jaw muscles, making it easier and more comfortable to open and close your mouth.

**Do Gentle Jaw Exercises** if instructed.

This prevents stiffness and helps restore the full, normal movement of your jaw.

**Continue a Soft Diet** until comfortable.

Chewing on soft foods (like dal rice, khichdi, mashed potatoes, soup, eggs) is easier on your healing jaw and prevents damage to the extraction site.

- **Dissolvable Sutures** are self-resorbing and will naturally fall out or dissolve within **7–14 days**.
- **Non-Dissolvable Sutures** need to be removed typically in 7–10 days, your appointment will be scheduled accordingly
- **If a Suture Comes Loose:** Do not panic. If it is beyond the first 48 hours, the site is often secure. If it is early or you notice significant bleeding, **call us**.
- **Leave Them Alone:** Do not try to remove or touch the sutures with your finger / tongue.