



EXTRACTIONS WITH BONE GRAFT

We hope you're doing well after your extraction and bone graft appointment. It is now up to you to follow these instructions for the best healing results. Keep this email handy for reference.

- **ANESTHESIA:** Your anesthesia will wear off in approximately 1 to 3 hours after the procedure. It is very important not to chew on the numb side (to prevent biting tongue, lip, etc.) until the anesthesia wears off.
- **DRY SOCKET PREVENTION:** After an extraction, it's important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. That's why we ask you to bite on a gauze pad for 30 to 45 minutes after the extraction. If bleeding or oozing continues after you remove the gauze pad, place another gauze pad and bite firmly for another thirty minutes. You may have to do this several times. After the blood clot forms it is important to protect it, especially for the next 24 hours. **DO NOT:** touch the surgical site, smoke, suck through a straw, rinse your mouth vigorously, or clean the teeth next to the extraction site. These activities will dislodge the clot and slow down healing. Limit yourself to calm activities for the first 24 hours, this keeps your blood pressure lower, reduces bleeding and helps the healing process.
- **PAIN/SWELLING MANAGEMENT:** Most people get some pain and swelling and, if they do, it usually happens about 48-72 hours after the surgery. After the tooth is extracted, you may feel some pain and have some swelling. Use a cold pack (a plastic bag of frozen peas works well) to the face over the area where the procedure was done for 10 minutes at a time, twice an hour, for the first 6 hours. You can periodically use an ice bag the rest of the day of surgery and the next day. If you use the ice bag as directed, you should have less swelling than you would have otherwise. Less swelling = less pain.
Use pain medication only as directed, for at least a week. It will usually work better if taken before the numbness wears off. Ibuprofen will help reduce the inflammation in the area worked on, and will further eliminate hot, cold and pressure sensitivity if taken as directed. Extra Strength Tylenol can be taken 2 hours after Ibuprofen in case additional pain management is needed. Use only as directed. Do not use Ibuprofen or Tylenol for more than one week. If an antibiotic has been prescribed, start taking it the first day (unless directed otherwise) and use it to completion. You can reduce stomach upset by taking it with food and/or plenty of liquid.
For the first 2 nights after the procedure, sleep in a recliner chair or with your head propped up with some pillows. A recliner is better. If you keep your head above your heart level for the first 2 days, it will significantly cut down on post-op swelling. Less swelling = less pain.
Avoid strenuous exercise for the first 7 days. Strenuous physical activity may increase postoperative pain or cause post-operative bleeding and swelling. Less activity equals less pain.



- **HYGIENE:** “Pink” saliva is normal for a few days. If you have bleeding, wipe the area clean. It has to be thoroughly cleaned first. Then apply gentle (it doesn't need to be real hard) pressure to the extraction site for 10 straight minutes with a soaking wet tea bag (black tea works the best), or a soaking wet gauze pad, or a clean washcloth, etc. Be sure it is soaking wet. If it is not, the clot will stick to it and start bleeding again when you pull it away. If it just won't stop, call.

Call us right away if you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling after two or three days, or a reaction to the medication.

Do not use a water-pik or an electric toothbrush around the surgical area for 6 weeks after the procedure. After that, it should be OK. Do not floss around the tooth/teeth worked on for 1 week, so you don't accidentally take out any of the stitches. After 4 weeks, there should be no oral hygiene restrictions, except for water-piks & electric toothbrushes as noted above. Rinse your mouth out (don't swish) with warm salt water (1/2-tsp. salt in 8-ounce glass of warm water). Hold this in the mouth for 30 seconds and spit out. Repeat. Do this 4-5 times per day for 7 days. Start day after the procedure.

It is very important to resume your normal dental routine after 24 hours; this should include brushing your teeth and tongue and flossing twice a day for 2 minutes. This speeds healing and helps keep your breath and mouth fresh.

If the doctor gave you a chlorhexidine rinse, use a Q-tip to apply it. Apply about 3 times/day for 4 weeks to the surgical site by dabbing the chlorhexidine-soaked Q-tip to the surgical area. Do not scrub it in. During the 1st 4 weeks, whenever you do start any tooth brushing in the surgical site, dip the toothbrush in the chlorhexidine, as well. If you run out, call us to pick up more. Once this liquid is applied, do not eat, drink or rinse out for 30 minutes.

- **EATING/DRINKING:** Drink lots of fluids and eat only soft nutritious foods on the day of the extraction. Don't use alcoholic beverages and avoid hot and spicy foods. You can begin eating normally the next day or as soon as it is comfortable. Chew on the area gently for the first few days, as to not disturb any surrounding tissue that may be irritated from the treatment. This is a restored tooth; so be mindful of chewing anything that may be too hard (nuts, ice, hard bread, etc.) or too sticky (candy, caramel, taffy, etc.) Avoid any foods that would be more likely to get stuck in the extraction site, such as corn, popcorn, nuts, and seeds (fruit like strawberries have seeds). Do this for at least 5 weeks (if we used a non-resorbable barrier we removed, then for 1 week after the barrier is removed). Citric juices, carbonated beverages or acidic foods, like tomatoes, may make it hurt, but won't damage the graft healing though. For the first 7 days avoid really hot foods or drinks. Consider a nutritional food supplement (Carnation Instant Breakfast drink, Ensure, Slim-Fast, etc.). Ensure makes a product called Glucerna for diabetics. After 5 weeks, there should be no eating restrictions. **Don't use straws for the 1st week.**



- **SUTURES/STITCHES:** The stitches and barrier membrane over the extraction site are usually non-dissolvable and will need to be removed about 3 to 4 weeks later.
- **AFTER THE FIRST WEEK:** Below are a few additional issues, we would like to share with you regarding your post-surgical routine.

Maintain your follow-up care visits. We'll want to monitor your healing and the integration of the bone graft at specific prescribed intervals, so be sure to keep all scheduled appointments.

Limit the use of temporary bridges, retainers or dentures. Strict adherence to the guidelines set out by your dental team regarding prosthetics is critical to proper healing. Not following these instructions can result in bone graft failure and incomplete extraction site healing. If you have any questions please call our office.

Practice careful oral hygiene. As you would expect, it's important to keep the surgical site, and the rest of your mouth clean for complete healing. Resume regular brushing and flossing as per your exit instructions, and avoid using an electric toothbrush or a water flosser until at least one month after your surgery.

Sneezing, coughing and blowing your nose. Continue to follow the advice we have given you after surgery. Coughing and sneezing creates negative pressure that can threaten the stability of the bone graft and should be practiced using an open mouth to reduce pressure. Blowing your nose should also be avoided if it is at all possible. Decongestants such as Drixoral, Dimetapp, or Sudafed will help reduce pressure in the sinuses.

Please call or text us at (707) 963-4611 if you have any questions.