
Instructions - After Extraction(s) / Bone Graft

If you require emergency assistance, please call (604) 733-9311 during office hours.

Outside office hours, please contact your dentist directly:

Drs. Matthew Choi (604-999-6917) / Bruce Marshall (604-230-1740) / Sonal Chhanabhai (778-889-7236)

What to Expect

- Swelling/Bruising: Swelling usually peaks within 24–48 hours and begins to subside by the 4th day. Mild bruising of the skin may also occur and can last up to 7–10 days.
- Discomfort: Pain is most noticeable as the anesthetic wears off. Take your pain medication before the numbing fully dissipates. We recommend alternating Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and Ibuprofen (Advil) every 3 hours as needed for pain (eg each drug every 6 hours).
- Bleeding: Mild oozing (pink saliva) during the first 12–24 hours is expected.
- Sutures: Gut sutures dissolve within 5–7 days. Nylon sutures require removal at 1–2 weeks.
- Socket Preservation – If bone graft material was placed, it is normal to notice small grains loosen with time. If a protective membrane was placed over the socket, do not attempt to remove it. It is normal for it to loosen slightly with healing and will be removed at 3–5 weeks after surgery.

What to Do

- Bite firmly on the gauze for 30–45 minutes after surgery. If bleeding continues: use a fresh moist gauze (or a moist black/green tea bag) on top of the site (not inside the socket), and apply firm pressure for another hour. Please call us if bleeding continues.
- Apply an ice pack outside of your face over the area. 15 min on / 15 min off (up to first 12 hours).
- Begin with cool or lukewarm fluids after 1 hour. Stick to soft foods (soups, mashed potatoes, smoothies, yogurt) for the first 2 days. Avoid hot, spicy, seeded, or crunchy foods that may irritate the site. Drink at least 2 litres of fluids daily to stay well-hydrated.
- Take all prescribed medications exactly as directed to minimize discomfort and risks of infection.
- Do not swirl/swish liquids forcefully for the first 24 hours. You can hold the salt water in your mouth and tip your head from side to side. Let the liquid fall out of your mouth into the sink, rather than spitting. After 24 hours, gently rinse with warm salt water (1 tsp salt in 8 oz/250 ml water) after meals. Resume normal brushing and flossing the next day, being careful to avoid the surgical site.
- Contact us immediately if you experience persistent bleeding, severe discomfort, or swelling that worsens after the third day.

What Not to Do

- Do not apply heat to your face. This increases swelling.
- Avoid **spitting, smoking, sucking through straws**, or anything that creates suction in your mouth—this can dislodge the blood clot and delay healing.
- Avoid strenuous activity or exercise for 24 hours, as increased blood pressure may cause renewed bleeding.