

## Reuss and Reuss Dental

### Post Operative Instructions: Extraction

Remember that you just had a tooth or teeth extracted- which is SURGERY!  
Be kind to yourself. You can promote faster healing and avoid complications, simply by following these instructions.

#### Day of Surgery:

**Healing:** After extractions, a blood clot forms in the surgical site. This is an important part of the normal healing process. You should therefore avoid activities that might disturb the surgical area. Do not rinse your mouth vigorously or probe the area with any objects or your fingers. Do not smoke, drink through a straw, play any wind instruments, or blow up balloons for 72 hours following your surgery. These activities create suction in the mouth, which could dislodge the clot and delay healing.

**Bleeding:** We have placed a gauze pack on the surgical site(s) to limit bleeding while clotting takes place. The gauze pack should be left in place for 30-40 minutes after you have left the office. Bite down firmly on the gauze, making sure it remains in place (do not clench). You may continue to change the gauze packs as needed. To replace gauze, fold a clean piece into a pad thick enough to bite on. Dampen the pad and place it directly on the surgical site. If you become hungry or thirsty, remove gauze while eating or drinking and replace it when you are finished. Bleeding should not be severe, if it is you may try repositioning the gauze or a moistened tea bag may be substituted for the gauze pad. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

**Swelling:** You may minimize swelling by applying a cold compress or ice pack to your face or cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the rest of the day.

Do not lay flat for the first 24 hours. Laying in a recliner is a good position. If you lay in bed, be sure to have one or two extra pillows under your head to keep it elevated.

**Pain:** You may be prescribed a medication to control discomfort and you should take your first pill before the anesthetic has worn off. If prescribed a pain medication, take as instructed on the label. Do not exceed the recommended dosage. Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery when taking prescription pain medications. Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications. If prescription pain medication is not needed, you may substitute for over-the-counter pain medication; such as: Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil or whatever non-aspirin pain reliever you would use for a headache.

**Antibiotic:** If prescribed, be sure to take an antibiotic as directed to help treat or prevent infection.

**Nausea:** This is most often caused by taking pain medications on an empty stomach. Reduce nausea by preceding each pill with a small amount of soft food, then taking the pill with a large amount of water. Staying in a reclined position also seems to settle the stomach.

**Numbness:** The local anesthetic will cause you to be numb for several hours after you leave the office. Be very careful not to bite, chew, pinch, or scratch the numb area.

**Smoking:** Smoking should be stopped following the surgery. Healing will be substantially reduced by the cigarette smoke chemicals in your body and the action of smoking may cause a dry socket.

**Brushing:** Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours following the surgery. After this, you may brush your teeth gently, but avoid the area of the surgery for 3 days. Do not spit forcefully after brushing your teeth, instead open your mouth and let your saliva and toothpaste fall out.

**Rinsing:** Do not rinse or swish at all for the first 24-48 hours after your procedure. After this, you may begin to rinse gently by placing salt water or prescribed mouth rinse in your mouth and gently rotating your head side to side. You may gradually become more aggressive. Over the counter mouth rinses and mouthwashes should be avoided during this early period.

**Diet:** For the first 24-48 hours, you should maintain a diet of soft foods, such as Jell-O, pudding, yogurt, cream of wheat, mashed potatoes, clear soups, etc. Food that crumbles, such as potato chips, popcorn, crackers, cookies, etc. should be avoided. Very hot foods should also be avoided to prevent burns of the extraction site. Try to keep food on the opposite side of your mouth to avoid the surgery site. Return to normal diet as tolerated.

**Activity:** Keep physical activities to a minimum for the first 24-48 hours following your surgery. Increased activity can lead to increased bleeding. Do not bend over or lift heavy objects for 2-3 days.

**Jaw Joint Pain:** Your jaw may be sore from holding your mouth open during surgery. Massage jaw muscles gently and eat soft foods. Do not over extend opening your mouth, as it can further aggravate this area.

## **Follow-Up Appointment**

You may need to return to the office within the first 7-10 days to have sutures removed or just for a brief follow-up healing check. At this time, you may be advised to use an antibiotic mouth rinse.

**If you have any further questions or problems please call:**

**530-365-4581**

**[drreuss.com](http://drreuss.com)**