

After Your Extraction or Oral Surgery

Post-Operative Care Instructions

Taking good care of the area for the next few days helps you heal comfortably and lowers the risk of complications. Please follow these guidelines, along with any specific advice from your dental provider.

The first hour

- Keep firm, steady pressure by biting on the gauze pad for **30–60 minutes**.
- Change the gauze only if it becomes soaked. A little oozing is normal for several hours.
- Rest quietly and keep your head slightly raised.

Protect the blood clot (first 24 hours)

A clot forms in the socket and protects the healing bone. To keep it in place:

- **Do not** rinse, spit forcefully, or use a straw.
- **Do not** smoke or vape — this greatly raises the risk of a painful “dry socket.”
- Avoid touching the area with your tongue or fingers.

Bleeding

- Some oozing is expected. Replace the gauze and bite firmly for another 30 minutes.
- A moistened black tea bag, bitten in place, can help slow bleeding.
- Call us if bleeding is heavy and does not slow after a few gauze changes.

Swelling & comfort

- Apply an ice pack to the cheek **20 minutes on, 20 minutes off** for the first day.
- Swelling often peaks 2–3 days after surgery, then eases.
- Take any prescribed or recommended pain medication as directed. If you are unsure which over-the-counter medicine is safe with your other prescriptions, please ask us or your physician.

Eating & drinking

- Choose soft, cool foods for the first day — yogurt, soup (not hot), smoothies (by spoon), mashed potatoes.
- Stay well hydrated. Avoid hot, hard, crunchy, or spicy foods, and chew on the opposite side.

Keeping the mouth clean

- After the first 24 hours, gently rinse with warm salt water ($\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt in a cup of water) a few times a day, especially after meals.
- Brush your other teeth as usual, staying gentle near the site.

Medications & rest

- Finish any antibiotic exactly as prescribed.
- Continue your regular medications unless told otherwise. If you take **blood thinners**, follow the plan agreed with your dentist and physician.
- Rest and avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours.

Please call us right away if you notice:

- Bleeding that will not slow down
- Pain that worsens after the third day
- A fever, or pus / a bad taste from the site
- Increasing swelling after day three
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing
- Numbness that does not fade

Questions or concerns? Call 613-854-8007 • Email info@seniordental.ca • Fax (form) to the number on your paperwork.

These are general guidelines and do not replace the personalized instructions of your dental provider. If you feel this is a medical emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department.