



After Care – Extractions

If you have a severely damaged or infected tooth, your tooth may need to be extracted. In most cases, you'll receive a bridge or dental implant to fill the space where the tooth was removed. When you leave the office after an extraction, it is very important that you treat the affected area carefully and take any medications Dr. Welch prescribes for you as directed.

In addition, follow these guidelines to avoid problems after your dental extraction:

Bleeding

Minor bleeding after an extraction is to be expected, but it's important to keep it under control. Follow Dr. Welch's instructions carefully! Typical advice is:

- **Bite firmly on gauze, keeping pressure on the area** to help form a blood clot in the tooth socket.
- **Change gauze pads regularly** so they do not get saturated with blood.
- **Do not lie down flat in the hours after your extraction** – keep your head elevated, which will help slow and stop any bleeding.
- **Do NOT drink out of a straw**, which may dislodge the blood clot, making you more susceptible to painful “dry socket.”
- **Do NOT smoke.** Smoking can break down blood clots.
- **After 24 hours, rinse your mouth with a salt-water solution 4 times a day.**

Discomfort or Pain

Minor pain after an extraction is normal, but by following the guidelines below, you can manage any discomfort you may experience.

- **You may experience mild pain or discomfort radiating from your jaw after having any kind of dental procedure**, and you can treat it with over-the-counter pain medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
- **You may have discomfort or mild pain in the area of the extraction** – the tissues around the tooth may have been infected before the extraction, and it is natural for the tissue to swell in response to the procedure.
- **Do NOT drink hot liquids or excessive amounts of alcohol.** Both may cause extra inflammation in the affected area, making your pain worse.
- **If you have severe pain after an extraction, call us.** In very rare cases, “dry socket” occurs because the blood clot dissolves or gets dislodged, leaving the jaw bone open to air, food, or liquids that enter the mouth.



Sensitivity

With virtually any dental procedure, sensitivity to hot or cold foods and drinks is a potential side effect. After the extraction, you may notice temporary sensitivity to certain sweet foods, air, or extreme temperature.

- **Consider using sensitivity-reducing toothpaste** for a few weeks after an extraction if you are experiencing discomfort due to sensitivity.
- **If your sensitivity lasts more than two weeks** after the extraction, please call our office.

After any dental procedure, it's important to practice normal, healthy dental hygiene. Keeping your teeth clean is a critical component of good dental health, significantly reducing the likelihood that you will develop cavities or other dental problems.

