

Tooth Extraction – Post-Op Instructions

After Anesthesia

- Numbness may last several hours; avoid chewing until it fully wears off.
- Be careful not to bite your cheeks, lips, or tongue.

Bleeding

- Light oozing or blood-tinged saliva may last up to **24 hours**.
- If bleeding increases, bite firmly on folded gauze for **45 minutes**; repeat as needed.
- Call your dentist if bleeding becomes heavy or uncontrolled.

Pain

- Take pain medication **before** numbness wears off for best relief.
- Narcotic medications may cause nausea, dizziness, itching, or constipation – stop if side effects occur.
- Switch to OTC pain medication if needed or call your dentist for guidance.

Swelling

- Swelling may increase for **24–48 hours**, peaking at **48–72 hours**.
- Use ice packs (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off) if your dentist advised it.
- Sleep with your head elevated for the first 48 hours.

Nausea

- Mild nausea can occur from anesthesia or pain medication.
- A small amount of carbonated beverage often helps.

Diet

- Stick to **soft foods and liquids** for 24–48 hours.
- Do **not** use straws or smoke for at least 48 hours.
- If only one side was treated, chew on the opposite side for a few days.

Oral Hygiene

- Brush your teeth as usual, but **avoid the surgical area for 4–5 days**.
- Do not disturb the extraction site.

Activity

- Limit activity for **2–3 days**.
- Avoid strenuous exercise or heavy lifting, which can increase bleeding.

Expected Post-Op Symptoms

- A slight temperature increase for the first 24 hours is normal.
- Temporary earache, soreness of nearby teeth, limited mouth opening, cracked lip corners, or skin discoloration may occur and will improve with healing.
- Small tooth fragments left intentionally in the socket usually cause **no problems**; they must be removed only if they later cause pain or infection.

Nerve Considerations

- Lower extractions or wisdom teeth may irritate nearby nerves, causing temporary itching, tingling, burning, or numbness of the teeth, gums, tongue, lips, or chin.
- These symptoms may last weeks to months, and in rare cases, longer.

Sinus Considerations (Upper Teeth)

- Removing upper teeth with long roots may create a small sinus opening.
- Antibiotics or additional treatment may be needed to prevent infection and help closure.

Dry Socket

- A painful dry socket can occur if the blood clot dissolves or dislodges.
- It may last a week or more and is treated with medicated dressings.
- Bone grafting the socket greatly reduces the risk.

General Notes

- Follow all instructions carefully to ensure proper healing.
- Contact your dentist immediately if you have concerns about pain, bleeding, swelling, or healing.
- You are responsible for costs if instructions are not followed.