

Advice after tooth removal



Now that the tooth has been removed, the healing process has already begun. It is important that you take good care of the healing socket. By following these instructions you will be surprised how quickly and comfortably the area heals. Any sensations you have over the next few days are usually healing sensations.

- Relax and take things easy for the rest of today and tomorrow. Resting and relaxing will maintain your pulse at a low rate and the healing will progress quickly and comfortably. Give yourself some tender loving care.
- Take painkillers as advised by your dentist. By taking the first tablet before the numbness wears off, you will ensure maximum comfort. Follow your dentist's instructions.
- Wait for six hours following the procedure before you rinse your mouth. Rinse gently with a warm salty solution (level teaspoon of salt in a pint of warm water). Gently rinse after every meal, first thing in the morning and last thing at night for seven days.
- For the first 24 hours avoid alcohol, very hot or cold drinks, and smoking.
- For the next few days, chew on the other side of your mouth and avoid the socket with your toothbrush and tongue.
- Use an extra pillow tonight to keep your head higher than your heart to reduce any bleeding and help the healing process.
- Unless you have been told otherwise, the entire tooth, with its roots, has now been removed. You might notice small

fragments of the thin bone that were around the tooth working their way out. This is perfectly normal.

- Any swelling or bruising will subside as the area heals. This can be greatly reduced by taking Arnica (Appendix I).

Regarding bleeding

It is normal for some bleeding to occur. This is part of the healing process. Remember, that a small amount of blood seems much more when it is diluted with saliva. The following advice will help to reduce any bleeding and allow you to stay calm and in control.

If the bleeding is continuous, keep your head higher than your heart to reduce the bleeding. Keep upright, sitting or standing.

Avoid rinsing to allow a clot to form. Clear the mouth of loose blood clots with a clean linen square or tissue so that you can find where the socket is bleeding. Use a gauze pad if extra were provided by the dentist, or alternatively use clean paper handkerchief or tissue to form a firm pad. Place the pad across the bleeding socket from the tongue to the cheek side. If the socket is between two standing teeth constrict the pad to fit.

Bite firmly to compress the pad on the socket and continue to sit up or stand. Keep the pad in position for 10 minutes after which, you should gently remove it, inspect the socket in a mirror and then replace the pad, (or use a fresh one). Stop using the pads when the bleeding stops.

If after an hour or two you have failed to control the bleeding, contact your dentist or NHS24 for further advice.

Remember: Now that the tooth has been removed, the healing process has already begun. By following the above instructions normally the area heals quickly and comfortably.

Appendix I - Arnica 30c

Arnica is available from any health food shop. Drops are best if available. It is preferable to start taking the Arnica just before the tooth is removed. Repeat or start taking it as soon as possible afterwards. Take every two hours on the first day. Take four times per day thereafter. Stop taking Arnica as soon as swelling or bruising has settled.

WARNING: If you are taking an anticoagulant drug (eg: Warfarin), unfortunately Arnica is contraindicated and unsuitable for you, and should be avoided.

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