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Tooth Extraction Home Care Instructions

1. **Bleeding Control:**

Leave the gauze pads in place for approximately 20 minutes and replace as needed. It will take three to six hours for the bleeding to stop. A small amount of oozing is normal during the first day. Avoid heavy spitting and drinking through a straw on the first day. If bleeding is excessive, place a roll of clean, moistened gauze over the site and keep firm pressure for 30 minutes. Elevate your head on two pillows or sit in a semi-reclined position the first evening.

2. **Pain and Infection Control:**

Take all medications as prescribed. If you have any type of unusual reaction, please call the emergency number listed above. Take your first pain medication before the numbness wears off completely (approx. 2 hours after extraction). Then take the medication as needed. Usually, ibuprofen, Tylenol or aspirin will relieve most soreness the following day. **DO NOT DRIVE OR OPERATE MACHINERY IF TAKING THE PRESCRIPTION PAIN MEDICATIONS.**

3. **Swelling Control:**

Apply an ice pack to your jaw on the side of the extraction for 30 minutes. **SWELLING TAKES TWO DAYS TO PEAK.** Don't be alarmed if your jaw is puffy two to three days after extraction. Apply moist heat to your face the day after surgery. Ice is only good for 24 hours. Heat will increase your comfort and decrease swelling.

4. **Diet:**

A soft diet is recommended the first day. Avoid chewing while your mouth is numb. Stiffness of your jaw is normal after surgery. It will take three to five days for most stiffness to resolve, so try a soft diet the first few days and increase your chewing as the stiffness improves.

5. **Oral Hygiene:**

The day after surgery, start salt water rinses over the extraction site. A mixture of ½ teaspoon of salt in an 8-ounce glass of warm water will make a good rinse. Rinse after each meal if possible. You may brush your teeth gently near the surgery site and can brush the other areas normally.

6. **Smoking:**

Avoid smoking for a minimum of two days and preferably for the entire healing period. If pain or unusual symptoms appear three to four days after the extraction, you may be developing a dry socket. Please call the office if you feel that this is occurring.

7. **Rest:**

Avoid excess exercise or heavy lifting for at least one to two days. Drink plenty of fluids and rest as needed.

8. **Nausea:**

Nausea is rare after a extraction. If you had an empty stomach before the extraction, please try to drink something within the first few hours to prevent nausea from the medications or blood in your stomach. Carbonated drinks can help alleviate nausea. **IF NAUSEA PERSISTS, PLEASE CALL THE PHONE NUMBER LISTED ABOVE.**