

## Advice and care after an extraction

### **After an extraction**

- 1) **Avoid** excessive exercise for the rest of the day, ideally rest by sitting in a chair and use an extra pillow for the first night
- 2) **Do not** drink anything alcoholic for the first 24 hours and avoid smoking
- 3) Take any pain killing tablets as advised by your dentist. Follow instructions regarding the dose carefully
- 4) After 12 hours rinse your mouth **gently** with warm salt water (one level teaspoon to one cup of water) and continue after meals and before bed for up to one week
- 5) Brush your teeth normally with toothpaste to keep the whole mouth clean, take care in the region where the tooth was extracted.
- 6) You may feel the sharp edge of the socket with your tongue and occasionally small fragments may work their way out of the socket. This is normal
- 7) Some swelling or discomfort in the first two to three days is also normal
- 8) Try not to disturb the socket with your tongue, by eating food on that side, or by vigorous rinsing. This will delay the healing process.

### **If excessive bleeding occurs**

- 1) Use some clean linen or gauze about 1 ½" (4cm) wide roll to make a firm pad, or use a clean handkerchief. Do not use paper tissue, it is the effect of pressure from the gauze or handkerchief that prevents bleeding, this is why a tissue will not work.
- 2) Keep sitting up in a chair and clear the mouth of any loose blood clots with the linen or gauze so that you can find where the socket is bleeding. This is important
- 3) 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
- 4) Bite firmly to compress the pad on the bleeding socket for 10-15 minutes. **Avoid** lying down
- 5) Inspect the socket and replace the pad, or use another one, if the bleeding still appears from the socket. Repeat for 10-15 minutes.
- 6) If your efforts are unsuccessful contact the dental practice

**Remember** if excessive bleeding does occur it is important to avoid exercise, drinking alcohol or disturbing the socket.

Occasionally after extraction of a tooth, the blood clot in the socket can break down, leaving a painful empty hole in the gum. This is called a "dry socket". If the socket becomes painful a day or two after the extraction, this is usually the reason. If this happens, you should contact the dental practice. If you smoke you are at greater risk of a dry socket