



**Peninsula
Dental**
Social Enterprise

Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE)

Tooth Extraction Post-Operative Instructions - Patient Information

Version 2.1

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Policy will be updated as required in response to a change in national policy or evidence-based guideline.



Post-Operative Instructions Following Removal of Teeth

Recovery after tooth extraction is generally quite straightforward, but you are likely to experience pain and swelling, particularly in the first 2-3 days. It is important to take it easy for a day or two after the operation.

General Precautions

- You will be numb in the area of the extraction for the next 3-4 hours. Be careful not to burn yourself with hot food or drink during this time and take care when eating to avoid potential lip /cheek biting.
- Do not disturb the extraction wound and avoid exploring it with your tongue or fingers.

Bleeding

- It is normal to experience slight ooze of blood following a tooth extraction and this can make your saliva appear pink or red.
- Avoid excessive spitting and do not rinse your mouth in the first 24 hours after the extraction.
- Please rest as much as possible over the next 2-3 hours whilst the clot forms in the socket.
- If bleeding restarts, soak one of the bite packs provided with clean water and squeeze out excess water before biting on it for 20 minutes. If these are not available, roll up a clean handkerchief, place it over the socket and bite down for at least 20 minutes (do not use tissue). If the bleeding continues, you should contact your dentist or emergency services (details given on the last page).

Pain Control

- You are likely to experience pain for the first 48 hours, although your mouth may well be sore for up to a week or so after the operation. Local anaesthetic injections given during the procedure ensure that you have no pain for the first 3-4 hours after surgery, but once the anaesthetic wears off, you may wish to take pain medication.
- Paracetamol and ibuprofen are effective for pain control especially when these two drugs are taken together. Please follow the directions given to you by your Dentist, GP or Pharmacist and never exceed the recommended maximum dose. If you are unable to take these medications your Dentist, GP or Pharmacist can suggest suitable alternatives.

Diet

- Avoid chewing on the affected side for the next 24 hours.
- Avoid hot liquids and hard foods for the next 24 hours. After each meal, ensure there is no debris left in the extraction socket.

Oral Hygiene

- You should be able to clean the adjacent teeth the day after the extraction with a soft toothbrush and toothpaste as usual but take care around the site of extraction and avoid excessive spitting and do not rinse the socket in the first 24 hours after the extraction.
- After 24 hours, gently rinse your mouth with warm salt-water mouthwash (1-teaspoon salt in a cup of warm water) after meals for the next 3-5 days.

Avoid (for 48-72 hours)

- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Exercise

Swelling

- Swelling, particularly in the cheek area, both inside and outside the mouth, is common. Again, it is worst for the first 2-3 days, after which it will gradually subside. It can be relieved by using ice packs, starting shortly after surgery. Bruising to the skin of the face may also occur. If after 2-3 days you feel that the swelling is not improving or is getting worse, this could be a sign of infection and you should contact the department urgently.

Jaw Stiffness

- You may have difficulty opening your mouth and experience pain or stiffness of the jaw joint. This will normally disappear after a couple of days but can occasionally last for up to 2 weeks. You may need to eat a soft diet for a week or so. Be careful not to force your jaw open before it is ready and do allow time for the swelling to go down. Ibuprofen will help to relieve this pain. If after 2-3 days you feel that your mouth opening is not improving or is getting worse, this could be a sign of infection and you should contact the department urgently.

Sensitivity of Teeth

- Sensitivity of the teeth next to the extracted tooth socket is common. Although it may last for several weeks, it is resolved with good oral hygiene.

Bad Breath

- You may experience bad breath. This is unlikely to last more than a week.

Stitches

- Stitches will normally dissolve by themselves and so do not need removing, but it is important to brush and rinse regularly to minimise food trapping.

Healing

- When the tooth is removed, the roots leave a 'socket' in the bone. This hole in the gum may last for up to 3 months.

In cases of extreme swelling or uncontrollable bleeding, please contact us immediately or seek assistance from your local Emergency Department out of hours.

Follow-up appointments are not usually booked after tooth extraction however, if you have complications, or are experiencing problems please use the following contact details:

Monday to Friday 0900 – 1600 hours
Peninsula Dental School, Dental Education Facility
All sites: 01752 987959

Out of hours (after 5pm and weekends):
NHS 111