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Post-Op Surgical Instructions

1A. **BLEEDING** – A certain amount of bleeding is expected, and the saliva may be blood tinged for 24-48 hours. If bleeding is persistent, placing a piece of sterile gauze over the extraction socket and bite on it for 20 minutes can control it. Repeat, if necessary. Do not rinse your mouth. It is important that the gauze be placed directly over the site where the tooth was removed and not over adjacent teeth. The gauze must be bulky enough to prevent the upper and lower teeth from meeting when biting firmly.

1B. If bleeding persists after proceeding as above, examine the extraction site for a clot. This is a mass of dark rubbery-like material which projects from the extraction site and may extend along adjacent teeth. If this is present, remove all of it by wiping the area with a piece of dry gauze. Then rinse the mouth vigorously with warm water to remove any further remains of the clot. Proceed again as in part 1A.

2. **PAIN** – taking the prescribed pain relievers as directed can control this. These medications should be taken with some food. Avoid alcoholic beverages.

3. **SWELLING** – Apply an ice bag to the face in the area of the surgery for periods of 20 minutes per hour for the first 24 post-surgical hours only. After 24 hours, a warm towel can be used at the same intervals. Swelling is not uncommon after surgery. It is usually greatest in about 24-48 hours and may last several days thereafter. Discoloration of the skin of the face and neck may follow surgery and should not be cause for alarm.

4. **MOUTH-RINSE** – Do not rinse the mouth for the first 24 hours after surgery. After this time, use a half-teaspoon of table salt in a glass of warm water and rinse gently after meals.
5. **DIET** – Soft and bland foods are advisable for the first 24 hours. Good nutrition after the surgery is essential. **DO NOT USE A STRAW FOR DRINKING** and absolutely **NO SMOKING**, as it will retard healing.
6. **HYGIENE** – Continued proper oral hygiene is imperative. Normal care should be maintained, but the surgical area should be excluded from care involving brushing, flossing, dental irrigation appliances, etc.
7. **FEVER** – A low-grade fever may occur following surgery and should not be cause for alarm.
8. **SUTURES** – If sutures have been placed, you **MUST** return in 4 – 7 days unless instructed otherwise.