



Puyallup Tribal Health Authority



Important reminders about your dental extraction

REMEMBER TO:

- Rest!
- Take medicine as directed
- Drink liquids and eat soft foods
- DO NOT disturb the healing area
- Use ice packs (20 minutes at a time) if directed
- Wash hands before and after changing gauze

DO NOT:

- Exercise or lift heavy objects
- Smoke or use any tobacco for 48 hours
- Suck on straws, candy, etc.
- Swish vigorously or spit
- Drink hot liquids, alcohol, or soft drinks

If you have questions, if complications arise, or if further care is necessary, please call the dental clinic at (253) 593-0232

2209 E. 32nd St.
Tacoma, WA 98404

www.eptha.com

Dental Surgery

Puyallup Tribal Health Authority



What should I know about dental SURGERY?

BLEEDING

Some bleeding is expected and should slow over the first few hours. To slow bleeding, maintain pressure with gauze for an hour or two. If heavy bleeding continues, apply pressure for 30 minutes with a moistened tea bag. Traces of light-colored blood in your saliva may continue for a few days. However, if bleeding continues to be heavy and darker in color, call the clinic.

PAIN

The surgical area will probably be painful after the anesthetic has worn off. It is a good idea to take some pain medication while you are still numb, as it is easier to prevent pain than to stop it once it starts. Over-the-counter pain medications such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) may help, or the dentist may prescribe something stronger. Avoid aspirin. Pain should gradually lessen each day. If pain is severe or is getting worse instead of better, call the clinic.

SWELLING

Dental surgery will often cause swelling which increases for the first three days, then slowly resolves. To reduce swelling, keep ice over the area for the first day or two (bags of frozen peas or corn work well). Ice should be kept on for 20 minutes, then off for 20 minutes, repeatedly. Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) will also help to reduce swelling.

Note: in cases of infection (including abscess or swelling prior to the extraction) ice is not recommended.

After dental extractions or surgery, your body will require some healing time. During this time, it is important to rest and to treat the area as gently as possible. Please read all the following information and follow all instructions to ensure the most comfortable and effective healing experience.

BRUISING

Some bruising may appear during the days following your surgery and should resolve on its own.

DIET

Liquids and soft foods are best (juices, yogurt, mashed potatoes, etc.). Nutrition is important while healing – choose foods/drinks high in vitamins and protein. Do not eat foods with small pieces that may get stuck in the healing area (rice, popcorn, etc.). Do not drink through a straw. Avoid hot liquids, carbonated liquids (soft drinks), and alcohol.

HYGIENE

It is important to keep your mouth clean, but more important to allow the area to heal. Any hard rinsing, sucking, or spitting may disrupt the newly forming tissues. You should brush and floss your other teeth, but make sure to stay away from healing areas. Brush your tongue. Starting on the second day, you may rinse very gently with warm salt water, especially after each meal.

ANTIBIOTICS

If antibiotics are prescribed, it is important to take the **full course** (all the tablets) to ensure effectiveness. If you have a bad reaction or need to discontinue your antibiotics, call the clinic and a dentist will decide whether a different antibiotic should be prescribed.

ACTIVITY

Rest, relax, and heal. Avoid any activity that raises your blood pressure.

Do not exercise, run, or lift heavy objects. Do not smoke or use tobacco for at least 48 hours (or longer if possible), as this irritates and slows healing.

DRY SOCKET

After a tooth has been extracted, the newly forming tissues might become dislodged, like a scab coming off. When this happens, a nerve ending at the base of the socket is exposed and causes great pain for several days. To reduce your risk of dry socket, DO NOT: smoke, suck, spit, or disturb the healing tissues. If you are experiencing severe pain, call the clinic.

SMOKERS

Do not smoke for at least 48 hours or longer if possible. Because it is so important to avoid smoking while you are healing from your surgery, nicotine patches are available through our pharmacy and may be prescribed by the dentist. Please ask the dentist if you think nicotine patches may help you.

SUTURES (STITCHES)

If sutures were placed, do not brush or disturb the area. Some sutures will dissolve in up to 3 weeks and others need to be removed by a dentist. If sutures become irritating or loose, a dentist can remove them for you. Otherwise, return as scheduled or as needed.