



# Caring for your mouth after an extraction

You need to take care of your mouth after a major treatment like a tooth extraction. Follow these instructions to help your mouth heal.

## What is an extraction?

An extraction is when a dental professional removes one or more of your teeth. You will be given an anaesthetic to numb the area before the tooth is removed.

## What happens after my extraction?

You may experience some discomfort once the anaesthetic wears off. Due to some bleeding in your mouth, you might also have pink saliva for the next day or two. Do not spit it out as this can cause more bleeding.

Anaesthetic can make you feel tired. Make sure you get plenty of rest after your treatment.

Your gums and cheek will feel swollen as your body starts to heal and you may experience some pain. This should begin to improve after about four days.

## What should I do if my mouth starts to bleed?

A gauze pad will have been placed in your mouth during your treatment. Bite down into the gauze for as long as your dental professional has advised. They should also give you some extra gauze in case of bleeding later.

If the socket begins to bleed after you have left the hospital, roll some gauze into a ball and place it in the gap where the tooth was. Bite down on it for around 30 minutes.

Remember:

- ▶ Do not suck, spit, rinse your mouth or put your fingers in your mouth for at least 12 hours
- ▶ Avoid hot drinks and hard foods for 24 hours
- ▶ Avoid alcohol and smoking
- ▶ Avoid vigorous activity for at least 24 hours
- ▶ Avoid taking aspirin unless normally prescribed by your doctor.

## I'm in a lot of pain. What should I do?

- ▶ If you are in a lot of pain, take some non-aspirin based pain medication.
- ▶ Cold foods like yoghurt and ice cream may provide some relief too.

## How can I look after my mouth after my treatment?

- ▶ For the first few days after your extraction, try to eat foods that are easy to chew like pasta, mashed potato, custard or soup.
- ▶ Eat on the other side of your mouth to avoid the sore part of your mouth.
- ▶ Gently rinse your mouth with salty water about 24 hours after your treatment and after your meals for around a week.



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