

Advice Following Extraction of a Tooth

After the extraction of a tooth the socket bleeds for a few minutes. A clot then forms in the socket and the bleeding stops. In the first few hours the clot is fragile and you must take care not to disturb it and start the bleeding again.

- Avoid sucking the socket or disturbing it with your tongue, fingers or toothbrush.
- Do not rinse your mouth out for 12 hours
- Eat soft foods and avoid hot drinks and alcohol for the rest of the day.
- Avoid vigorous exercise or strenuous work until the next day.
- Once the numbness wears off the socket will feel painful. It is advisable to take pain relief as soon after the extraction as possible. Take whichever painkiller you usually would for a headache (e.g. Paracetamol or Ibuprofen) every 4-6 hours for the next 24 hours. Continue as necessary after this.
- Homeopathic Arnica can also be very useful in the first 3 days to reduce bruising.

How do I improve healing of the socket?

- **Avoid smoking** for a minimum of 3 days. Smoking increases the risk of infection.
- **Keep your mouth clean** by brushing thoroughly but gently to avoid disturbing the socket.
- **Rinse your mouth with warm salt water** 3 x per day- preferably after eating. Begin the day **after** the extraction and continue until the gum heals over.

What if the socket bleeds?

If the socket bleeds after you have left the practice, do not be alarmed as much of it will be saliva which is bloodstained. Bleeding can usually be stopped by applying pressure to the socket. Rinse your mouth gently to remove excess blood clot.

Roll up the gauze pad or clean handkerchief and place over the socket. Bite firmly for 20 minutes while sitting still.

If there is still distinct bleeding after following this procedure twice, please contact the practice to have the socket checked.

If after 3 days your socket is becoming more painful contact the practice for advice

