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Dental Surgeon

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BLEEDING

It is normal to expect some slight oozing from an extraction socket or other wound. To minimize bleeding, keep activity to a minimum on the day of surgery. Should you experience bleeding, sit down and rest, roll a clean tissue, cotton wool or gauze into a pad about the size of your finger, place it over the socket/wound and bite on it for twenty minutes. In the event of persistent bleeding do not hesitate to contact us.

PAIN

Some pain is to be expected after any surgery, take whatever painkillers you would normally use. Please read instructions that accompany your painkillers and take your medication on a regular basis to increase it's effect.

ANTIBIOTICS

You may be prescribed an antibiotic, it is important that you complete the course for the antibiotics to be effective. If you do not feel well taking the antibiotic you should consult your dentist or GP. Please read the instructions that accompany any medication.

SWELLING

Some swelling can be expected after any surgery, and depending on the surgery may be quite dramatic, the swelling may increase in size for 48 hours after the surgery had been completed. Like any bruise it will take between 7 and 10 days to disappear. Swelling around your jaw may make it uncomfortable to eat and talk.

LOCAL ANAESTHETIC

Numbness can persist for a number of hours after the surgery. Be careful that you do not bite your lip or cheek or scald yourself on very hot liquids while you are numb.

RINSING AND CLEANING

Do not rinse your mouth for 24 hours following the extraction. Hot salt mouthwashes used after every meal will be of benefit in keeping the wound clean and help healing. You may also use your own mouthwash to help keep your mouth clean if you wish. You should brush your remaining teeth gently, as usual, avoiding the socket area for a few days. As soon as it is comfortable to do so gently brush the wound while brushing your teeth. This will keep the wound clean and will help stitches to dissolve.

EATING

A soft diet is advisable, but eat what you can tolerate. Avoid very hot food and drink on the day of surgery as this may make you bleed.

SMOKING

Smoking delays all wound healing and increases the risk of postoperative infections. Avoid smoking on the day of surgery and for several days after if possible.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is best avoided on the day of surgery as it may encourage bleeding.

DRY SOCKET

A dry socket is a recognised complication following any dental extraction. It occurs after approximately 4 % of all dental extractions.

A dry socket is more common after having teeth extracted on the lower jaw, after difficult extractions, after having wisdom teeth removed, in females and in patients taking oral contraceptives.

The cause is unknown, but it is believed to be a failure to heal related to an inadequate blood clot forming in the socket initially or premature loss of the blood clot.

The symptoms vary from mild to intense pain which may come on immediately after the dental extraction or approximately 3 days later and last between 7 and 10 days. On rare occasions the symptoms may last much longer.

The pain is poorly or not relieved by painkillers, is constant and may keep you awake at night.

Antibiotics will make no difference. Painkillers are generally ineffective and there is no effective treatment which a dentist can offer.

It is best not to disturb the socket in the search for a cure as this can aggravate the condition.

Some dentists will place dressings in the socket in the hope of relieving the pain. This is effective in a small minority of patients but also delays healing and may prolong the length of time with which you will suffer pain.

The only effective treatment is to keep the wound as clean as possible with either hot salty mouth washes or Corsodyl mouth wash, to optimize conditions for healing and let nature take its course, the condition will then resolve naturally with no long term consequences.