

## Instructions for Home Care

After tooth removal and surgical procedures including extractions, periodontal surgery and implant placement.



## 3. Control of Infection

The healing period for most people is 7-10 days. During this time:

- Eat soft foods (nothing too hard, too hot, or too spicy) e.g. omelettes, soup, etc
- Rinse your mouth gently with a warm salty water mixture:

Take half a cup of warm water and mix 2-3 teaspoons of table-salt until it dissolves. Rinse your mouth GENTLY for 1-2 minutes. You may experience unpleasant breath after this procedure—rinsing with the saline mixture will help to minimise this problem, and it also acts as a natural disinfectant.

## DO NOT SWALLOW - SPIT THE SALT-WATER MIXTURE OUT

### Dry socket – 'alveolar osteitis'

The most common complication after tooth removal is known as dry socket. If you have ever had this, please let me know before your surgical procedure.

For most dental extractions, I will place a sterile piece of Spongostan®/Surgifoam®. This is a gelatine based absorbable haemostat. It absorbs 45-50 times its own weight of blood and within 4-6 weeks it is completely absorbed in the human body. This helps prevent food debris from contaminating the area and helps you retain the blood clot.

Dry socket infections typically occur 3 days after the procedure and follow the loss of the blood clot which forms immediately after tooth removal. If you have a foul taste, and/or pain which does not seem to be going away, you may be developing a dry socket. You should call me and I will arrange an appointment to review your condition.

## 1. Control of Bleeding

### Before the procedure

Aspirin makes people bleed more easily, and we prefer you cease aspirin for 7 days before 2 days after your procedure. If your medical practitioner has asked you to take aspirin, please ask them if you can temporarily stop it and tell us of the decision before the surgery date.

### After the procedure

If I have asked you to bite on cotton gauze, please keep pressure on the gauze by biting on it for at least 20 minutes after you leave my office.

I will give you additional gauze. If bleeding continues, take a fresh piece of gauze, fold it twice and bite on it firmly. Make sure it is over the bleeding site. Keep it there for 15 minutes. Pressure is the best way to reduce bleeding, oozing or seeping. It's important to realise that some oozing or weeping is normal after a surgical procedure or extraction.

If bleeding continues for more than four hours please contact me for advice. However, you may find small amounts of blood or oozing for up to 24 hours. This is normal and will stop. You need to have a blood clot form to start healing. To avoid disturbing the blood clot at the surgery site, you should plan to take it easy. In particular:

**DO NOT EAT** for four hours after you leave my office.

**DO NOT RINSE** your mouth or drink any tea, coffee or other fluids for four hours after you leave my office. (If necessary, take a small sip of water with pain relief tablets).

**DO NOT SMOKE** for at least 24 hours. 1-2 weeks during the healing period is good; never again is best.

**DO NOT DO ANY STRENUOUS EXERCISE** for 24 hours. It is important to keep your blood pressure normal. It's also a good idea to apply pressure over the surgical site (where you had the extraction or surgical procedure) with an ice pack, (or a packet of frozen peas) for 5 minutes on, 5 minutes off while pressing firmly on the outside of your face for 30 minutes, when you get home. Doing this will reduce your chance of bruising or swelling.

## Enhanced Pain Management For Adults

If your pain is expected to be severe, there is an enhanced pain management technique available. This technique uses alternating doses of an NSAID (e.g. Nurofen®) and a paracetamol/codeine tablet (e.g. Panadeine®) or paracetamol alone.

### How it works:

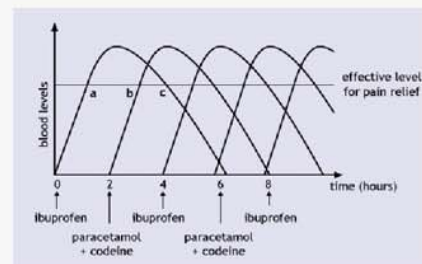
- The first dose is Nurofen® and is taken either before the procedure or straight after.
- The second dose is Panadeine® and is taken 2 hours after the dose of Nurofen®.

This cycle is repeated until morning, or for 24 hours, when the Panadeine® can be stopped.

It is sometimes advisable to continue taking the Nurofen® for a further 2-3 days, if you have continuing pain.

This technique also works by taking both drugs every four hours. However, by staggering the doses, gastric irritation can be reduced as the three different drugs are not in your stomach at the same time.

The technique works because NSAIDS target local inflammation (at the surgical site) while paracetamol and codeine act within your central nervous system to reduce the effects of pain.



Representation of how the two-drug combination therapy works

## 2. Control of Pain

### Before the procedure

I recommend to consider taking a dose of an NSAID like Nurofen®, one hour before your appointment. This helps to prepare your body to cope with the inflammatory response sometimes produced by a surgical procedure. If you do this, you should be more comfortable immediately afterwards and as the local anaesthetic wears off.

**Please consult your medical practitioner if you think you cannot take an ibuprofen.**

Take analgesics (pain relief) for example:

- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory drugs ('NSAIDS') like Nurofen®
- Paracetamol (Panadol®, or any other paracetamol)
- Paracetamol with Codeine (Panadeine®)
- An analgesic combined with a mild sedative (Panalgesic® or Mersyndol®)

Most dental pain is caused by inflammation and NSAIDS are far more effective than paracetamol, or even codeine.

You should read and follow the instructions for use of each drug carefully or follow the advice of your medical practitioner. **Avoid Aspirin-based analgesics (Disprin®, Aspro®) for 2 days afterwards.** Aspirin can promote bleeding.

Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery if you decide to take an analgesic combined with a sedative.

Also see over the page for **enhanced pain management for adults.**

If you have any questions at any time about any aspect of your treatment please contact me. If you have sutures inserted you may need to have these removed. I will tell you if this is necessary.

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