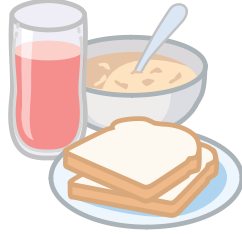


## Eating While You Heal

Eating right will help you heal faster after your tooth extraction. Eat regular meals as soon as you can after surgery. As you heal, try the tips below.

### Start with Soft Foods and Liquids

- At first, eat soft foods such as oatmeal, mashed potatoes, bananas, and soups.
- Also drink liquids high in nutrients such as vegetable and fruit juices or high-protein drinks.



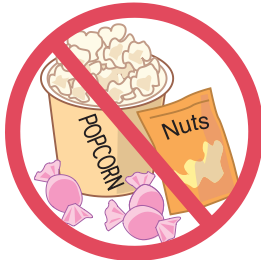
### Move on to Solid Foods

- Cut foods into small pieces to ease chewing.
- Use a blender for hard-to-chew foods, such as apples and carrots.



### Be Careful when you Chew

- Limit chewing. Avoid crunchy or sticky foods, such as popcorn, taffy, and nuts.
- Chew on the side of your mouth that's opposite the extraction.



## Follow-up Visits

You may need to see your dentist to make sure you are healing right. With proper care, your mouth should heal in several weeks. Call your dentist if you have any problems.



- Dentist's phone number:
- Next dental visit:
- Special instructions:

# After a Tooth Extraction

Caring for your mouth



Promoted and distributed in public interest by



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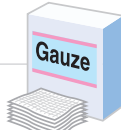
This brochure is not intended as a substitute for professional dental care.

## Taking Care of Your Mouth

When you've had a tooth extracted (removed), you need to take care of your mouth. Doing certain things, even on the first day, may help you feel better and heal faster.

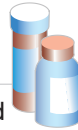
### Control Bleeding

To help control bleeding, bite firmly on the gauze placed by your dentist. The pressure helps to form a blood clot in the tooth socket. If you have a lot of bleeding, bite on a regular tea bag. The tannic acid in the tea aids in forming a blood clot. Bite on the gauze or the tea bag until the bleeding stops.



### Minimize Pain

To lessen any pain, take prescribed medication as directed. Don't drive while taking any pain medication as you may feel drowsy. Ask your dentist if you may take over-the-counter medication, if needed.



### Reduce Swelling

To reduce swelling, put an ice pack on your cheek near the extraction site. You can make an ice pack by putting ice in a plastic bag and wrapping it in a thin towel. Apply the ice pack to your cheek for 10 minutes. Then, remove it for 5 minutes. Repeat as needed. You may see some bruising on your face. This is normal and will go away on its own.



### Get Enough Rest

Limit activities for the first 24 hours after an extraction. Rest during the day and go to bed early. When lying down, elevate your head slightly.



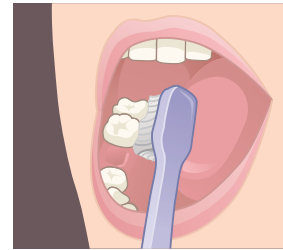
## Do's

Below are some things you can do to help your mouth heal.

Do eat a diet of soft, healthy foods and snacks. It may be easier for you to eat soft foods soon after your extraction. Drink plenty of liquids while you're healing.



Do brush your teeth gently. Avoid brushing around the extraction. And don't use any toothpaste. Rinsing toothpaste from your mouth may dislodge the blood clot.



Do keep the extraction site clean. After 12 hours you may be able to gently rinse your mouth. Rinse 4 times a day with 1 teaspoon of salt in a glass of water. Check with your dentist first.



### CAUTION

Rinse your mouth very gently. Otherwise, the blood clot may dislodge.

## Don'ts

Below are some things to avoid while you're healing.

Don't drink with a straw. Sucking on a straw may dislodge the blood clot.



Don't drink hot liquids. Hot liquids may increase swelling. Limit your alcohol use. Excessive use of alcohol may slow healing.



Don't smoke. Smoking may break down the blood clot, causing a painful tooth socket.



### Call Your Dentist If:

- Pain becomes more severe the day after your extraction
- Bleeding becomes hard to control (slight oozing of blood on the first day is normal)
- Swelling around the extraction site worsens