



MICHAEL D. SOCK, DMD, MD, FACS

AFTER MULTIPLE TOOTH EXTRACTIONS

Having many teeth extracted at once differs from having just one or two teeth removed. The bone must be shaped and smoothed during multiple teeth extraction before inserting a denture.

In this case, the following conditions may occur and are considered normal:

- You may experience swelling and discoloration, sometimes around the eye or under the chin. Swelling usually begins the day after surgery and reaches its peak within two or three days, dissipating gradually. You can minimize swelling by applying a warm compress to the affected area.
- It is normal to experience a sore throat due to swelling muscles, which should resolve on its own over two or three days.
- Also, note that your lips may become dry or cracked. Application of Vaseline or other ointments can help a great deal.

If you received immediate dentures, you might develop some sore spots. Usually, your regular dentist will see you several days after surgery and make the necessary adjustments to relieve sore spots. Failure to make this appointment may result in severe denture sores, which can, in turn, extend your healing process.

BLEEDING

Following the extraction of multiple teeth, it is normal to experience some bleeding for 12-24 hours after surgery. Your surgeon will place a gauze pad over the incision sites intraorally. Keep it in place for half an hour after surgery or until saturation, whichever happens first. Bleeding will slow and eventually stop; you may need to replace the gauze and bite with firm pressure for several cycles. Once bleeding has stopped, you may remove the gauze indefinitely.

If you experience bleeding, keep your head elevated, and avoid exercise and hot liquids. If bleeding persists, reach out to our office for further instruction.

Denture wearers can expect some oozing from around the sides of their dentures. Temporarily removing the dentures can allow you to eat and properly clean the wound sites. However, leaving the dentures in place for as long as possible can provide pressure and serve as a "band-aid" to control bleeding and pain.

SWELLING

Following wisdom teeth removal, you can expect swelling around the mouth, cheeks, and even underneath the eyes. This symptom is the body's normal response to surgery. Usually, the swelling does not become evident until the day after surgery and will reach its peak on day two or three. You can control the swelling by continuously using ice packs outside your face and over the surgical site while awake. After 36-48 hours, switch ice out for moist heat (e.g., a warm compress) with gentle cheek massage 3-4 times per day to help the swelling subside over the next week.

Your jaw may become stiff following surgery, especially during the second and third days of recovery. Stiffness is a normal response to surgery. Once swelling declines, you may begin daily mouth opening exercises to regain functional functionality. You may require 3-4 weeks of exercising before returning to normal.

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PAIN

We recommend beginning any prescribed pain medications before your numbing medicine wears off.

If you experience mild to moderate pain, you may take 1-2 tablets of Tylenol® or Extra Strength Tylenol® every 6 hours. Ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) can also help control pain, swelling, and inflammation. Ibuprofen generally comes in 200mg tablets; your doctor may suggest a 600mg dosage every 6 hours or an 800mg dosage every 8 hours.

Your doctor may prescribe narcotic pain medications for more severe pain. Narcotic pain medications can cause you to feel groggy, and they may also slow your reflexes. We recommend not driving, operating machinery, or drinking alcohol when taking narcotic pain medicines.

Following 72 hours after surgery, pain should become less and less pronounced each day. If discomfort persists or intensifies, contact your surgeon.

ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics can help prevent infection, so take them as directed if your surgeon prescribes them. Do not continue using antibiotics in case of a rash or other adverse reactions. Contact our office if you have any questions.

DIET

Once tolerating liquids, you can start eating any soft foods that are easy to clean out of your mouth. We recommend chewing away from the surgical site when possible.

Seek nourishment regularly, and drink lots of fluids to avoid dehydration. Over the first few days, your food intake may be lower, so compensate by drinking more liquids and protein or nutrition shakes for calories and protein. Aim for a minimum of five to six glasses of liquid daily.

EXERCISE

If you feel able, you may return to light cardiovascular activities 3-4 days after surgery. If you exercise regularly or play a sport, be aware that you may not be able to intake your regular food and liquid amounts, and you may need to ease back into those activities slowly. If you become lightheaded, avoid exercising for several more days to give your body more time to recover. We recommend avoiding heavy weightlifting and contact sports for 7-10 days.

KEEPING YOUR MOUTH CLEAN

On the day of your surgery, you may gently brush your teeth at night to keep your mouth as clean as possible. Begin rinsing with salt water 3-4 times daily, especially after eating.

Your surgeon may prescribe a prescription-strength mouthwash and/or salt water rinses.

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