

TAKING CARE OF YOUR TEETH AFTER FILLINGS

When an anesthetic has been used, your lips and tongue may be numb for several hours after the appointment. Avoid chewing and hot beverages until the numbness has completely worn off. It is very easy to bite or burn your tongue or lip while you are numb.

It is normal to experience some hot, cold and pressure sensitivity after your appointment. Injection sites may also be sore. Ibuprofen (Motrin), Tylenol or aspirin (one tablet every 3-4 hours as needed for pain) work well to alleviate the tenderness. If pressure sensitivity persists beyond a few days or if the sensitivity to hot or cold increases, contact our office.

You may chew with your composite fillings as soon as the anesthetic completely wears off, since they are fully set when you leave the office.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR TEETH AFTER CROWN & BRIDGE WORK

Crowns and bridges usually take two or three appointments to complete. In the first visit, the teeth are prepared, and molds of the mouth are taken. Temporary crowns or bridges are placed to protect the teeth while the custom restoration is being made. Since the teeth will be anesthetized, the tongue, lips and roof of the mouth may be numb. Please refrain from eating and drinking hot beverages until the numbness is completely worn off.

Occasionally a temporary crown may come off. Call us if this happens and bring the temporary crown with you so we can re-cement it. It is very important for the temporary to stay in place, as it will prevent other teeth from moving and compromising the fit of your final restoration.

To keep your temporary in place, avoid eating sticky foods (gum), hard foods, and if possible, chew on the opposite side of your mouth. It is important to brush normally, but floss carefully and don't pull up on the floss which may dislodge the temporary. Instead, pull the floss out from the side of the temporary crown.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR TEETH AFTER COSMETIC RECONSTRUCTION

Remember that it may take time to adjust to the feel of your new smile and bite. When the bite is altered, or the position of the teeth is changed, it takes several days for the brain to recognize the new position of your teeth or their thickness as normal. If you continue to detect any high spots or problems with your bite, call our office so we can schedule an adjustment appointment.

It is normal to experience some hot and cold sensitivity. The teeth require some time to heal after removal of tooth structure and will be sensitive in the interim. Your gums may also be sore for a few days. Warm saltwater rinses (a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) three times a day will reduce pain and swelling. A mild pain medication (one tablet of Tylenol or Ibuprofen (Motrin) every 3-4 hours) should ease any residual discomfort.

Don't be concerned if your speech is affected for the first few days. You'll quickly adapt and speak normally. You may notice increased salivation. This is because your brain is responding to the new size and shape of your teeth. This should subside to normal in about a week.

Daily brushing and flossing are a must for your new dental work. Daily plaque removal is critical for the long-term success of your new teeth, as are regular cleaning appointments.

Any food that can crack, chip, or damage a natural tooth can do the same to your new teeth. Avoid hard foods and substances (such as beer nuts, peanut brittle, ice, fingernails, or pencils) and sticky candies. Smoking will stain your new teeth. Minimize or avoid foods that stain such as coffee, red wine, tea and berries.

If you engage in sports let us know so we can make a custom mouthguard. If you grind your teeth at night, wear the night guard we have provided for you.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR TEETH AFTER TOOTH EXTRACTION

After tooth extraction, it's important for a blood clot to form to stop the bleeding and begin the healing process. That's why we may ask you to bite on a gauze pad for 30 minutes after the appointment. If the bleeding or oozing still persists, place another gauze pad and bite firmly for another 30 minutes. You may have to do this several times.

After the blood clot forms, it is important not to disturb or dislodge the clot as it aids healing. Do not rinse vigorously, suck on straws, smoke, drink alcohol or brush teeth next to the extraction site for 72 hours. These activities will dislodge or dissolve the clot and slow the healing process. Limit vigorous exercise for the next 24 hours as this will increase blood pressure and may cause more bleeding from the extraction site. After 24 hours, gently swish warm salt water in your mouth a few times a day.

After the tooth is extracted you may feel some pain and experience some swelling. An ice pack or an unopened bag of frozen peas or corn applied to the area will keep swelling to a minimum. Take pain medications as prescribed. The swelling usually subsides after 48 hours.

Use any pain medication that was prescribed. Call the office if the medication doesn't seem to be working. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if signs and symptoms of infection are gone. Drink lots of fluid and eat nutritious soft food on the day of the extraction. You can eat normally as soon as you are comfortable.

It is important to resume your normal dental routine after 24 hours. This should include brushing and flossing your teeth at least once a day. This will speed healing and help keep your mouth fresh and clean, maintaining your overall dental health.

After a few days you will feel fine and can resume your normal activities. If you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, continued swelling for 2-3 days, or a reaction to the medication, call our office immediately at 973.377.6500.