

If you have any questions please call the office 804-354-1600, or for after hours assistance, call the answering service at 1-866-420-8819.

Dry Socket Care Instructions

What is a dry socket?

The socket is the opening in the bone where the tooth has been removed (extracted). After a tooth is extracted, a blood clot forms in the socket to protect the bone and nerves underneath. Sometimes the clot can break down after a couple of days following the extraction. This leaves the bone and nerve exposed to air, food, fluid, and anything else that enters the mouth. This can lead to increasing pain that can last a week or in some cases it can be longer. There is no clear understanding of why a dry socket develops in some patients or extraction sites, and not in others. We do know that lower third molar extraction sites and people who smoke are more susceptible.

How is a dry socket treated at COFS?

The extraction site(s) will be rinsed out with warm water and cleaned of debris. The socket will then be filled with either a resorbable or non-resorbable medicated dressing with a special paste to relieve discomfort. If the non-resorbable packing is placed you will need to return to the office in the next two to four days to have the dressing removed and possibly replaced depending on how fast the site heals. Sometimes a dry socket requires multiple dressing change appointments until it has healed adequately. Your doctor will instruct you when to schedule a follow up appointment and what medications to take for pain relief.

MOST IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS:

The non-resorbable packing must be removed by your doctor or a Surgical Assistant within two to four days after it's been placed in the extraction site(s).

*** If left in place an infection will develop. ***

The resorbable packing will dissolve in a few days. Usually you will not need a follow up appointment unless the pain returns. You will be given a monoject syringe (a needleless syringe) to rinse out the openings. The doctor will instruct you as to when you can start rinsing the area with the monoject syringe

❖ A Surgical Assistant will explain and teach you how to use the monoject syringe.

If you have made an appointment and cancel you must reschedule within a day.

Other instructions specific to you: _____
