

Post-Extraction Care: The Salt Water Rinse

A salt water rinse is one of the simplest and most effective ways to promote healing and reduce the risk of infection after an extraction. This gentle solution helps keep the surgical site clean without the harsh chemicals found in some commercial mouthwashes.

How to Prepare Your Rinse

1. **Water:** Start with 8 ounces (1 cup) of **warm water**. Ensure it is not hot to the touch.
2. **Salt:** Add **1/2 to 1 teaspoon** of standard table salt.
3. **Optional:** For extra soothing properties, you may add **1/2 teaspoon of baking soda**.
4. **Mix:** Stir until the salt is completely dissolved.

Instructions for Use

To protect the developing blood clot and ensure proper healing, please follow these steps carefully:

- **Wait 24 Hours:** Do not rinse on the day of your surgery. Begin your rinsing routine exactly 24 hours after your procedure.
- **The "Tilt" Technique:** Do not swish vigorously. Instead, take a mouthful of the solution and gently move your head from side to side, allowing the liquid to bathe the extraction site.
- **Gentle Release:** Do not spit. Lean over the sink and allow the solution to fall naturally out of your mouth. Forceful spitting can dislodge the blood clot and lead to a painful "dry socket."
- **Frequency:** Rinse **3–4 times daily**, specifically after meals and before bed. Continue this for 1–2 weeks or as directed by your dentist.

Important Safety Tips

- **Do Not Swallow:** The solution is for rinsing only.
- **Adjust for Comfort:** If the salt causes a stinging sensation, reduce the amount of salt for the first 2 days, then gradually increase it back to the recommended amount.
- **Listen to Your Body:** A slight ache is normal, but if you experience sharp, escalating pain or a foul taste that persists despite rinsing, please contact our office immediately.

Clinical Note: Maintaining a clean environment at the extraction site is the best way to prevent complications. If you have any questions regarding your recovery, we are here to help.