



What happens after a tooth extraction?

When the procedure is complete, your dentist will place a piece of gauze over the extraction site and ask you to close down with firm, steady pressure. This helps slow bleeding so a blood clot can form. (Clotting is a normal aspect of recovery. It promotes healing and reduces the risk of [dry sockets](#).) You'll take the gauze out once the bleeding has slowed enough. You may continue to have light bleeding throughout the first 24 hours.

Risks / Benefits

What are the advantages of pulling a tooth?

Tooth extraction offers a number of benefits. Most importantly, it reduces harmful bacteria that can damage your teeth and gums. Left untreated, a decayed or damaged tooth can wreak havoc on your smile, causing a domino effect of problems. Removing your affected tooth gives you the best chance for optimal oral health. Additionally, a tooth extraction can help ease dental pain almost immediately — especially if your tooth was severely broken or infected.

What are the risks or complications of tooth extraction?

Like any surgical procedure, tooth extraction carries a small risk of complications. These may include:

- Post-surgical infection.
- Dry socket.
- Nerve injury.
- Perforation of maxillary sinus.
- Delayed healing.

What are the side effects of removing a tooth?

Normal side effects following tooth extraction include bleeding, swelling, bruising, and discomfort. Your dentist will provide instructions on how to successfully manage your healing.

Recovery and Outlook

How long does it take to recover from a tooth extraction?

It depends on the complexity of your case. However, most people feel back to normal in just a few days. While you'll be able to return to routine activities within 48 to 72 hours, it usually takes the jawbone several weeks to heal completely. Therefore, if you're planning on replacing the tooth with a [dental implant](#), you'll probably need to wait a few months to allow for full recovery.

Tooth extraction aftercare

After your extraction, your dentist will give you a detailed list of post-surgical instructions. Here are some general guidelines for a speedy recovery:

- **Keep the extraction site clean.** Gently rinse the area with an antimicrobial mouthwash or warm salt water two to three times a day. Avoid brushing directly over your extraction site until your dentist tells you it's safe to do so. Brush and floss all other areas normally.
- **Take all medications as directed.** Your dentist may prescribe [antibiotics](#) and [pain relievers](#). It's important to take all of these medications exactly as directed. You can also take over-the-counter pain relievers, such as [acetaminophen](#) and [ibuprofen](#) as listed: Take 400mg of (2 tabs) Ibuprofen and 500mg (1 tab of extra strength) Tylenol every (4) four hours as needed for pain.
- **Avoid strenuous activity for at least two days.** An elevated heart rate can cause increased post-operative bleeding and discomfort. Skip the gym for the first 48 to 72 hours. Ask your dentist when it's safe to resume normal routines.

What can I eat after a tooth extraction?

Avoid hard and crunchy foods for the first few days. Stock your fridge and pantry with soft foods like rice, pasta, eggs, yogurt and applesauce. You'll also want to avoid drinking through straws, as this can dislodge blood clots and cause dry sockets.

When can I go back to work or school?

Most people are able to return to work or school within a day or two. If you have a job that requires a lot of lifting or physical labor, you may need to take a few more days off work.

When To Call the Doctor

When should I see my healthcare provider?

Any time you develop a [toothache](#) or dental pain, it's important to schedule a visit with your dentist. They can help determine the cause and design a personalized treatment plan.

If you've already had a tooth extraction, call your dentist if you develop a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher, drainage (pus) around the extraction site or severe pain that doesn't improve with medication. If you have any additional questions please call the office at **330-274-3495**.