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WHAT TO DO AFTER A TOOTH EXTRACTION

ANESTHETICS: Your child will be numb for several hours following an extraction. Be sure your child does not bite his/her lip, cheek, or tongue by accident. If bitten, the area will swell and ulcerate but will heal completely in 7-10 days.

BLEEDING: Your child will be discharged biting on gauze. This gauze should be left in place for 10-15 minutes. If necessary, replace the existing gauze with a fresh one if the bleeding continues. Removing the gauze sooner than 15 minutes will disturb the blood clot and cause more bleeding.

DIET:

- Avoid hard foods with sharp edges (i.e. Doritos, Fritos, crust of a pizza or French bread).
- Soft foods should be eaten for 24 hours (yogurt, mashed potatoes, fries, pasta).
- Cold foods such as ice cream and milk shakes are recommended.
- Drink lots of liquids.
- **DO NOT USE A STRAW, SUCKING ACTION WILL DISTURB THE BLOOD CLOT.**

MEDICATION: If your child experiences discomfort or low-grade pain, you may give him/her the appropriate dosage of Acetaminophen (Tylenol).

ACTIVITY: Reduce your child's activity as much as possible. Avoid horseplaying, encourage relaxing activities.

ORAL HYGIENE: Do not brush or rinse on the day and night of the extraction, but resume normal brushing the following morning.

Reference:

- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry: The Handbook. 1996, 102.
- American Dental Association. Tooth Extraction, postoperative instructions. 1995.