

Home care after dental surgery or repair



Your child may have had teeth cleaning, fillings, crowns or extractions (teeth pulled) today. This information can help you take care of your child at home.

What should I give my child to eat and drink?

- Start with clear liquids, such as juices, ice pops, Gatorade, Powerade or water.
- Add soft foods, such as mashed potatoes, pudding and scrambled eggs, once your child can drink without any problems.
- Avoid hot drinks for 48 hours.
- If possible, avoid using straws and sippy cups for 48 hours if your child had teeth pulled.
- Have your child drink plenty of fluids.

How do I care for my child at home?

- Your child may run a low-grade fever (temperature of 99°F to 101.5°F) for the first few days after surgery. Be sure to call the doctor if your child has a fever over 101.5°F or a bad smell from coming from their mouth.
- Your child's lips may swell. Put a cool washcloth or small ice pack on their lips for 5 to 10 minutes at a time for comfort.
- After extractions, a small amount of bleeding is normal. If there is oozing, have your child bite down on a clean, dry washcloth or gauze for 20 minutes. Do not try to remove any clots.
- Do not rinse your child's mouth for 24 hours unless advised differently by the doctor.

What medicines should I give?

- Give acetaminophen (Tylenol or less costly store brand) if advised by your child's doctor to help with discomfort. Follow the directions on the box carefully, or ask your child's doctor how much medicine to give.
 - Do not give your child more than 5 doses of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period.
 - Do not give acetaminophen to babies younger than 3 months of age without a doctor's order.
- If your child has prescription pain medicine that has acetaminophen in it, do not give extra acetaminophen unless it has been 4 hours since the last dose of the prescription medicine. Wait 4 more hours before giving another dose of either medicine.
- Give other medicines as advised by your child's doctor.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Home care after dental surgery or repair, continued

What can my child do?

- Keep your child at home on the day of their surgery or repair. Have them do quiet activities, such as watching TV, listening to music, reading or playing board games.
- Begin normal activities the next day if your child seems ready.
- Begin brushing their teeth with a soft toothbrush as advised by the doctor.

When should I call the doctor?

Call the doctor **right away** if your child has:

- Bad smelling drainage or pus from any extraction sites.
- Bleeding that continues during a 6-hour period after biting on a washcloth 2 times for 20 minutes each time.
- Fever over 101.5°F.

What follow-up care does my child need?

Your child's doctor will tell you when to schedule a follow-up visit. Be sure to keep your appointment to make sure your child's dental health is good.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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