

Aftercare Instructions

Simple, practical advice for the hours and days after treatment. Keep this leaflet to hand — and call us on 01892 516030 if you are ever unsure.

1 After local anaesthetic (numbing)

- Your lip, cheek or tongue may stay numb for 2–4 hours. Avoid hot drinks and chewing on that side until feeling returns, so you do not burn or bite yourself.
- Children should be supervised — it is easy to chew a numb lip without noticing.
- Do not drive or operate machinery if you have had sedation.

2 After a filling

- White (composite) fillings are set immediately — you can eat once the numbness has worn off.
- Mild sensitivity to hot, cold or pressure is normal for a few days and settles on its own.
- If your bite feels high or uneven once the numbness has gone, call us — a small adjustment takes minutes.

3 After an extraction

Some discomfort, swelling and slight oozing are normal.

- **For the first 24 hours:** no rinsing, spitting, smoking, alcohol, hot drinks or strenuous exercise. This protects the blood clot that starts healing.
- If bleeding restarts, bite firmly on a clean, damp gauze or handkerchief for 20 minutes while sitting upright. Repeat once if needed.
- From the next day, rinse gently with warm salt water (a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) after meals for a week.
- Take painkillers as advised before the anaesthetic wears off. Avoid aspirin as it can increase bleeding.
- Increasing pain 2–4 days after an extraction may be a ‘dry socket’. It is not dangerous but it is uncomfortable — call us and we will dress the socket.
- Eat soft food, chew on the other side, and keep the rest of your mouth clean as normal.

4 After dental implant or bone graft surgery

- Expect swelling and bruising to peak around day 2–3. A cold compress on the cheek (20 minutes on, 20 off) for the first day helps.
- Do not lift your lip to look at the area, and do not disturb the stitches — they dissolve or are removed at your review visit.
- Use the mouthwash we prescribe exactly as directed. Keep the area clean but do not brush directly over the surgical site until we say it is safe.
- Stick to soft, cool food for the first week. No smoking — it significantly reduces implant success.
- Take the full course of any antibiotics prescribed, and finish them even if you feel well.
- Contact us straight away if you have heavy bleeding, swelling that makes swallowing or breathing difficult, or a temperature.

5 After a hygiene visit (scale & polish)

- Gums may feel tender and bleed a little for a day or two — this is normal as the inflammation settles.
- Teeth can feel more sensitive to cold for a few days. A sensitive toothpaste rubbed on the affected area (and left, not rinsed) helps.
- Keep going with the technique your hygienist showed you: brush twice a day for a full two minutes, and clean between the teeth every day.

6 After teeth whitening

- For 48 hours avoid anything that would stain a white shirt: tea, coffee, red wine, curry, beetroot, tomato sauces, coloured drinks and smoking.
- Sensitivity is common and short-lived. Use a sensitive toothpaste and avoid very cold food for a day or two.
- With home whitening, wear the trays exactly as instructed and stop if you have significant discomfort — call us for advice.

7 After crowns, veneers and composite bonding

- A temporary crown or veneer is only lightly cemented: avoid sticky and hard foods, and floss by pulling the floss out sideways rather than up.
- Your new restoration may feel unfamiliar for a few days; your tongue and bite adapt quickly. If the bite feels high, call us.
- Composite bonding can chip with hard foods and nail-biting. Avoid using your front teeth as tools, and wear a night guard if you grind.

8 After root canal treatment

- Tenderness on biting for a few days is normal — take over-the-counter painkillers as directed.
- Avoid chewing hard food on the tooth until the permanent filling or crown is fitted; a root-treated tooth is more brittle until protected.

When to call us

Pain that is getting worse rather than better after 3 days · bleeding that will not stop with pressure · swelling spreading to the eye or neck · difficulty swallowing or breathing · a temperature · a broken restoration or lost temporary.

01892 516030 — out of hours, call NHS 111. For a life-threatening emergency, call 999.

This leaflet is general guidance and does not replace the specific advice given to you by your dentist. If anything here differs from what you were told at your appointment, follow your dentist's instructions.