



River Valley
PEDIATRIC DENTAL
SPECIALISTS

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Follow-Up Instructions for Children: Local Anesthetic

Your child has had a dental procedure performed with local anesthetic. The local anesthetic has removed all sensation (feeling) from an area of the mouth and had created a “numbness” in the area indicated below:

It is important that the child does not rub, scratch or bite the indicated “numb” area, both the outside and inside of the mouth. Typically, the area is “numb” for one to three hours after leaving the office.

Protection of the anesthetized areas after leaving the office is important. If care is not taken, the child could cause considerable “self-inflicted” damage to the anesthetized areas. This will result in discomfort after the anesthetic has worn off. Please make sure your child is not biting, scratching, or pulling on their lip.

*Nothing to eat or drink until the “numbness” has worn off.

* Keep the cotton roll or gauze square positioned in the mouth until the “numbness” is gone. The cotton will become saturated with saliva. This is normal. The cotton is simply a reminder for the child not to “bite” the affected lip or cheek area.

* Encourage your child to keep swallowing. Quite often, because the area is “numb” the child has an unwillingness to swallow. Swallowing does feel different when the area is “numb”; however it can and should be done.

Some children complain about the “lack of feeling” associated with local anesthetic and regard it as discomfort. This is not the case. Actually, the child is dissatisfied with the feeling of numbness created by the local anesthetic and associated it with discomfort.

*Reassure the child that the teeth are “sleeping” and they will “wake up” very soon.

*Nothing can make them “wake up” faster.

*Sleeping teeth are not fun, and the “sleepiness” will go away soon. Everything will be fine as soon as the teeth “wake up”.

* Do not talk about “needle” or “shots”. We have made every effort during the procedure to avoid these anxiety producing words. In many cases, your child is unaware that an injection has been given. We call this sleepy juice in our younger patients and an injection in our older patients.

* Do not “blame” because an area is anesthetized. Local anesthetic is very important for children’s dental care. The teeth need to be “sleeping” when the “bugs” are washed off the teeth.

Discomfort

After the local anesthetic has worn off, most children do not have any post dental treatment discomfort. If your child indicated that discomfort exists, Tylenol or Ibuprofen is appropriate to make things better, typically one age appropriate dose is all that is needed.

Sensitivity to cold for a few days is not unusual. This does decrease over a short period of time. Avoid extremely cold beverages or ice cream product for a few days.

Usually the first meal after dental treatment should be on the softer side. Heavy chewing foods should be avoided to allow for the teeth to adjust to the dental procedures.

Extractions

If a tooth was wiggled out (extracted), the area is packed with gauze before leaving the office. The child should stay biting light on the gauze until the anesthetic has worn off. Chewing the gauze is not biting lightly on the gauze.

- * Try to encourage your child to avoid talking while the gauze is in his or her mouth
- * Do not take the gauze out and inspect the area before the anesthetic has worn off
- * You will most likely see some blood on the gauze when you remove it; this is normal

Typically, there are very few complications from this point on. Discomfort is treated with Tylenol or Ibuprofen. If any swelling occurs, an ice pack applied to the area 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off usually takes care of the problem. Swelling, pain, bruising, bleeding, and infection following extraction in children is very rare. A soft diet for the next 12 hours is recommended to avoid food impaction into the extraction site. Avoid carbonated beverages. Brush the area normally starting 12 hours after the extraction. A clean mouth heals faster.

If any additional bleeding occurs from the extraction site, roll up a gauze square and bite down tight on it for one hour. Do NOT take it out to look at it or change even if it gets bloody. This will only cause more damage to the extraction site. Bite tight and keep biting for 1 hour. Do not forget to swallow.

If there are complications as a result of a dental procedure, please call our office.

Thank you for allowing us to care for your child’s dental needs.