



Post-Operative Instructions Following Oral Surgery

Pain

- There should be no pain immediately after the operation due to the local anaesthetic used. This should last for 3-4 hours before sensation returns slowly and care should be taken to avoid biting the lip or tongue during this time.
- Pain tends to be worse on the 2nd or 3rd day but gradually improves over a period of 7-10 days.
- Simple painkillers such as Paracetamol, Ibuprofen or Codydramol should control the pain.
- If there is a sudden increase in pain after a few days, this may indicate infection and the surgeon should be contacted.

Swelling

- This is common after surgery has been carried out in the jaw.
- The swelling reaches its maximum 2-3 days after surgery.
- The swelling should resolve 7-10 days after surgery.
- Bruising of the face occasionally occurs and can take up to 2 weeks to resolve.

Bleeding

- This should be minimal by the time you leave the surgery/hospital.
- Blood stained saliva is to be expected for 24-48 hours after the operation.
- **Do not rinse** the mouth for the first day. This may disturb the blood clot and cause bleeding.
- If persistent bleeding occurs, roll up a piece of gauze and place it over the wound and bite firmly over a period of at least 15 minutes.

If bleeding does occur, place clean damp gauze or a folded clean handkerchief across the socket and bite on it for at least 15 minutes. If excessive bleeding continues, you should telephone the maxillofacial surgery department on 0121 424 5307, Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm. Outside of these hours, please contact the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on 0121 627 2000 and ask for the On-Call Maxillofacial SHO.

Oral Hygiene

- The next day, use a hot salt-water mouth bath. The water should be as warm as possible and a spoonful of salt added. Take a mouthful and hold it still for a couple of minutes before spitting out.

Information for Patients

- Repeat 4 times daily. This will help healing.
- Keep your teeth clean with gentle tooth brushing if possible. A tooth brush can be softened under a hot tap.
- Chlorhexidine (Corsodyl) mouthwash will help reduce plaque while tooth brushing is difficult.

Diet

- Your mouth opening will be restricted for about a week.
- Eating semi- solid food should be possible.
- Use your own discretion and gradually start eating normally according to your own pace.

Stitches

- If you have stitches (sutures) in your mouth, these should dissolve and drop out after a period of 7-10 days.

Medication

- Antibiotics after the operation may be required in some cases.
- If necessary, antibiotics and painkillers will be prescribed or advice given.

Time off work

- This will depend on your profession and the amount of surgery.
- The average time off work should be between 3-5 days, but there is a great deal of variation between individuals.

Follow-up

- If follow- up is needed, this is usually 2 weeks after surgery.

Useful Telephone numbers:

Maxillofacial Surgery Department

Solihull Hospital **0121 424 5307**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital 0121 627 2000

Ask for the Maxillofacial Senior House Officer (SHO) on call. There will be a doctor who can help you 24 hours a day.

Birmingham Children's Hospital 0121 333 9999

Children under the age of 16 years please contact the Children's Hospital on 0121 333 9999 and ask for the maxillofacial senior officer (SHO) on call.

Additional Sources of Information:

This leaflet is based on one designed by the British Association of Oral Surgeons, but has been modified by us to reflect local practices. For further information you can visit the British Association of Oral Surgeons website on www.baos.org.uk/index

Information for Patients

You can go online and view NHS Choices website for more information about a wide range of health topics <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk.