

Post-Op Instructions Following Oral Surgery

Maxillofacial

Patient Information Leaflet

Pain: There should be no pain immediately after the operation due to the local anaesthetic used. This should last for three to four 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 second or third day but gradually improves over a period of seven to ten days. Simple painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen should control the pain. If there is a sudden increase in pain after a few days you will need to contact your dentist, as this may indicate infection.

Swelling: This is common after surgery has been carried out in the jaw. The swelling reaches its maximum two to three days after surgery. The swelling should resolve seven to ten days after surgery. Bruising of the face occasionally occurs and can take up to two 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: Do not rinse the mouth for at least 24 hours. This may disturb the blood clot and cause bleeding/infection. If persistent bleeding occurs, roll up a clean piece of gauze and place it over the wound and bite firmly over a period of at least 15 minutes.

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. Repeat four times daily; this will help with healing. Keep your mouth clean with gentle tooth-brushing if possible. A tooth brush can be softened under a hot water tap. Chlorohexidine (Corsodyl) mouthwash will help reduce plaque while 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 and medication: If you have stitches (sutures) in your mouth, these should dissolve and drop out after a period of seven to ten days. If necessary, antibiotics and painkillers will be prescribed or advice given.

Time off work: Will depend on your profession and the amount of surgery. The average time off should be between three to five days, but there is a great deal of variation between individuals. If a follow-up appointment is needed, this is usually two to four weeks after surgery.

AVOID: Avoid smoking for several days as smoking reduces the rate of healing and increases the risk of infection. Avoid alcohol and vigorous exercise for 24 hours.

Leaflet Details

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Evidence

Details of the evidence used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: Patient Information Officer at 01524 512476.

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact PALS on 01539 795497.

UHMBT is a no smoking Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any of the hospital sites. You can contact the NHS North Lancashire Stop Smoking services on the number below:

NHS Quit Squad - **0800 328 6297**

If you live in Cumbria, please call **0300 013 3000** to find a local pharmacy who are offers 1-2-1 support and nicotine replacement therapy.

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