

Patient Information

Maxillofacial department (Clinic 11)

Orthognathic Surgery (Mr Stockton's patients)

Orthognathic surgery is surgery which corrects dental and facial discrepancies. The bones of the jaw are cut and repositioned, and then held in place by mini plates. Orthodontic treatment is required before and after surgery.

This leaflet should answer some of your questions.

Why might I need surgery?

In order to correct the position of the teeth and provide a functioning bite, the supporting bones of the jaws must be in the correct position. If this is not the case, orthodontics alone will not correct the bite. Surgery will be required to move the jaws into the correct position so the teeth will then meet correctly.

If I need jaw surgery, why do I also require orthodontics?

If the jaws are to be moved into the correct position, it is important your teeth are moved so that they will bite together properly after surgery.

What type of brace will I need to wear?

Fixed braces are used prior to jaw surgery because they permit the most accurate positioning of the teeth prior to the operation.

Are the braces removed before the operation?

No. The braces remain in position during and after the operation for a number of months. During the operation they help the surgeon to position the jaws correctly. After the operation, they help the orthodontist "fine tune" the bite with the aid of elastic bands.



What about appointments?

You will need to attend two or three appointments shortly before your operation. This is so that the laboratory technicians can prepare for your treatment and for you to have an anaesthetic assessment.

How will the operation be done?

Using a general anaesthetic, the operation will be done from inside your mouth, leaving no external scarring.

Will my jaws be wired together?

It is **extremely** rare for the jaws to be wired together. Small metal plates are used to hold the fracture sites together as they heal. These plates are on the surface of the bone, but beneath the skin, and generally remain in place forever. Very occasionally, they are removed at a later date.

Can I eat normally?

Yes. Up until the operation you should be able to eat normally. For your orthodontic treatment to work well and in the shortest possible time, it is important you take care of your teeth and braces.

In order to prevent damage to both, you should avoid the following:

- Toffees, boiled sweets, chewing gum, chocolate bars etc
- Fizzy drinks – including diet drinks, excessive amounts of fruit juice
- Hard foods which might damage the braces, such as apples, crusty bread, etc

Hard foods can be eaten with care if you cut them up first.

After the operation you will have a liquid or soft diet for the first few weeks. A nutritionally balanced, liquidized diet is important for healing. On discharge you will be given a liquid diet advice sheet.

Are there any after effects?

- You will have swelling and bruising after the operation. This will rapidly begin to decrease over the first 2-3 weeks.
- For operations to the lower jaw, it is fairly common to have some numbness of the lower lip for some weeks or months afterwards. In a very small number of cases, a localised area of numbness will remain.

Patient Information

This numbness will not affect the movement of your lip, only the feeling in it, in a similar way to an injection at the dentist.

- As with any operation, you will have to take it easy for the first week or two afterwards. You should therefore expect to be off college / work for at least this length of time.

Are there any risks involved?

There are potential risks involved with any operation. Fortunately with this type of surgery these are rare. However, it is important that you are made aware of them and they will be discussed with you when you see the maxillofacial surgeon and the orthodontist at the combined clinic.

Will I look very different after the operation?

You will almost certainly look different to some degree. How different, usually depends on how much movement of the jaws is required. You should discuss this with your orthodontist and maxillofacial surgeon.

When will I be given information about my hospital stay?

- At your pre-op assessment, you will be given an information sheet about your stay in hospital
- You will be admitted to Ward 32 early on the Friday morning that your operation is scheduled for
- Ward 32 is the central ward on the third floor
- You should be discharged over the weekend

How long will the overall treatment take?

It usually takes 24-36 months, but will vary according to how severe your case is. Failed and cancelled appointments or repeated breakages of your braces will add to the overall treatment time.

How often will I need an appointment?

You will need frequent and regular appointments with the orthodontist during treatment for the braces to be adjusted, approximately every 6-8 weeks. You will also be required to attend a combined clinic where an orthodontist and maxillofacial surgeon will discuss and plan your treatment.

Patient Information

Do I still need to see my regular dentist?

Yes. It will be important you still have regular check-ups with your regular dentist throughout orthodontic treatment. Your orthodontist will not be checking your teeth for decay.

If you have any further questions that you feel you would like to ask, then please write them down and bring them with you to your next appointment. It is important you fully understand what is involved in having such treatment before you decide to go ahead.

For further information contact the osteotomy link nurse at the Maxillofacial department, Clinic 11 Tel. 024 7696 6500

Useful websites

British Orthodontic Society: www.bos.org.uk

British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons:
www.baoms.org.uk

The department acknowledges the help of the British Orthodontic Society in producing this leaflet.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, we will do our best to meet your needs. Please contact the Maxillofacial Dept. Tel. 024 7696 6500

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

Document History	
Department:	Maxillofacial
Contact:	26500
Updated:	June 2022
Review:	June 2025
Version:	9
Reference:	HIC/LFT/143/07