

## Department of Maxillofacial and Head & Neck Surgery

# Post-operative instructions following oral and facial surgery

This advice is for patients who have undergone minor oral surgery, such as dental extractions and other minor oral or facial surgeries. Not all the points will apply to you. However, either your surgeon or nurse will go through the relevant points.

### Medication

Take pain medication as advised or prescribed following your surgery, even though the local anaesthetic is still effective. Keep taking the maximum safe dose at the recommended times for the first 48 hours.

Pain medication can take up to 40 minutes to work, so start taking them **before** the local anaesthetic has worn off.

**Take all your prescribed medicine and complete the course, to ensure good wound healing.**

### Eating and drinking

Stick to soft foods for the first 48 hours following dental extractions. Where possible, chew on the opposite side to your site of surgery.

Try to avoid very hot drinks for the first 24 hours after your surgery.

**An intact clot is vital for healing. Eating firm foods too soon can disturb the clot.**

### Exercise

**Avoid vigorous exercise (for example running, swimming) for 24 hours.**

Exercise increases blood pressure, which might cause bleeding around where you have had surgery carried out.



## Patient Information

### **Smoking**

Avoid smoking for as long as possible after your surgery.

Smoking delays healing by reducing the blood supply to the wound and can also make you more susceptible to infection.

### **Your wound**

#### **Bleeding**

If bleeding persists, then dampen the gauze which has been supplied. Either hold it onto the area of surgery for 20-30 minutes or bite down on it as necessary while resting.

### **Hygiene**

**Do not rinse your mouth out until the day after surgery. Then start warm, salt water rinses three times a day.**

The clot can be dislodged if you rinse on the same day as the surgery and if disturbed can increase the risk of infection and slow healing.

If you have had surgery done inside the mouth then you can brush your teeth gently that evening, and normally the next day.

Keeping your teeth clean is important for healing. A softer brush (such as a baby's toothbrush) will avoid damage to the surgical site.

### **Stitches (sutures)**

The stitches inside your mouth are usually dissolvable and can take up to two or three weeks to dissolve. Stitches on the skin need to be removed, usually in five to seven days time.

Your surgeon will advise you on this. It can usually be done at your GP's surgery by the practice nurse. You will be given a follow up appointment in the clinic if your stitches need to be removed at the hospital.

If you have any queries or concerns, then contact the hospital on the numbers overleaf.

In the event of an emergency, go to your local Emergency Department.

## Patient Information

### Contact numbers

Between the hours of 9am to 4pm, please call the direct line on 02476965969 and leave your message. This voicemail is for post operative advice only. A member of the team will call you back.

If wish to cancel or rebook an appointment, please call the booking centre via the hospital switchboard on 024 7696 4000.

For out of hour's **emergency advice**, contact the doctor on call via the hospital switchboard and ask to speak to the Maxillofacial senior house officer.

Surgery Date: ...../...../.....

Surgeon: .....

Procedure: .....

Discharge drugs:

- Co-Codamol 8/500 or 30/500       Ibuprofen 200mg/400mg
- Diclofenac 50mg
- Amoxicillin       Co-Amoxiclav       Metronidazole
- Other (please insert below).....

Drugs advised to purchase from pharmacy: .....

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact on 02476 966473 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

## Patient Information

### Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

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[www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback)



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