



Brighton and Sussex
University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Oral surgery including dental extractions

Department of Maxillofacial Surgery

You are being admitted for surgery in the Day Surgery Unit. This leaflet will advise you of what to expect before and after the operation.

Why do I need this treatment?

Dental extraction

There are a number of reasons for dental extraction including decay, over crowding, impacted wisdom teeth and in preparation for orthodontic work. Your surgeon will have discussed this with you in the clinic.

What should I expect before my operation?

A nurse will admit you to the ward. Routine observations including blood pressure, temperature and pulse will be taken. Females of child bearing age will be asked to provide a urine sample for pregnancy testing. This is a legal requirement prior to surgery.

The anaesthetist and the surgeon will see you prior to the operation. If you have any concerns or questions now is the time to discuss them. The surgeon will mark the correct site of operation (not for all dental extractions) with an indelible marker and ask you to sign your consent form.

Are there any risks?

With dental extractions there is a risk of pain, bleeding, bruising, stiffness in opening the mouth, swelling and infection. Specifically with lower wisdom teeth there is a risk of permanent numbness to the lip, chin and tongue (1%).

As should have been discussed with you prior to lower wisdom tooth surgery, the risk of permanent numbness to part of the lip and chin depends on the closeness of the wisdom tooth to the main nerve in the jaw bone, whilst the overall risk of permanent numbness to each half of the tongue is 1%.

This will be discussed again when you are asked to sign the consent form. If you have any further questions or concerns regarding numbness, please ask. You will be given a long acting local anaesthetic once you are asleep to reduce the pain, you wake up with this and it should wear off within 12 hours or so,

There are risks associated with an anaesthetic. The nurse will provide you with a booklet called 'You and your anaesthetic' at the pre operative assessment. The anaesthetist should also discuss this with you on the day of your admission.

What should I expect after the operation?

You will wake up in the recovery room. You can expect to have an oxygen mask over your mouth and a 'drip' giving you intravenous fluids into your hand or arm. This is routine. When you are alert and orientated you will be transferred back to the ward area.

On return to the ward staff will continue to observe you for pain and bleeding. You will need to eat and drink before being discharged home.

Your surgeon should speak to you after your surgery to advise on how the operation went and any expected follow up you might need. A nurse will discharge you and advise you of the following, pain relief, bleeding, follow up appointments, wound care etc.

Looking after yourself when you go home

You will need a responsible adult to stay with you for 24 hours following a general anaesthetic.

How can I keep it clean?

Do not rinse your mouth out for the rest of the day or you will dislodge the blood clot from the socket, which can cause pain and bleeding.

The following day you should rinse your mouth with a teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm, pre boiled kettle water. Repeat this three times a day after meals for 3-4 days.

You can clean your teeth as normal, but to be careful around the socket as this area is likely to be sore for a few days.

Will it bleed?

If you have bleeding, roll up some gauze and apply firm pressure for at least 20 minutes. Repeat if necessary. If the bleeding does not stop after 40 minutes of applying firm pressure

- please contact the oral and maxillofacial surgery department on the numbers below.

Will I be in pain?

Pain afterwards is normal, although varies between patients.

The doctor may have prescribed you with painkillers following your procedure. Please take them as prescribed. If not, mild painkillers such as Ibuprofen or paracetamol are usually adequate for controlling

post-operative pain. You can get these without prescription from your pharmacy. Please check that these medications are suitable for you with the chemist.

Will I be swollen?

There is often some swelling which is usually at its worst about 48 hours after the procedure. It can last for a week or so.

Can I eat?

You will be numb after the procedure from the local anaesthetic so soft and bland foods are advisable for the first 12 hours. Avoid eating anything hot until the numbness has worn away.

Can I smoke / drink alcohol?

Try not to smoke for at least 72 hours, as smoking will delay healing and may interfere with blood formation and increase the risk of post-operative infection.

It is advisable not to drink any alcohol for 24 hours after the operation.

Will I have stitches and will I need to come back to have them taken out?

If you have stitches put in these are usually dissolvable, but this can take anything up to a couple of weeks. If they are not dissolvable, you will be informed.

Numbness of the lower lip, chin and tongue

When you wake up from the surgery, you will be numb. This can last quite a few hours and even longer.

You will not routinely be given a review appointment so **if the numbness continues for a week or more, please contact the oral and maxillofacial surgery department on the number below for an urgent appointment.**

Will I need time off work?

Following general anaesthetic we recommend up to a week off work. You do not need a sick note, unless you have taken more than a week off work.

Who do I contact if I have concerns following my procedure?

If you are worried and would like further advice, please do not hesitate to contact us. A doctor is available to deal with your concerns 24 hours a day.

During normal working hours, Monday to Friday 8 am until 5 pm please telephone the Maxillofacial clinic where your procedure was carried out:

Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton – 01273 696955 Ext. 4067
Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath – 01444 441881 Ext. 8308

For advice during evenings, weekends and on public holidays, our partner organisation, Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead has a doctor available to assist with any concerns.

Queen Victoria Hospital - 01342 414000 Ext. 6635

Evening hours – Monday to Friday 5 pm until 8 am

Weekend hours – Friday, 5 pm to Monday, 8 am

Public holidays – 24 hours cover.

Please ensure you have your patient reference number to hand when you contact us.

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Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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