PATIENT INFORMATION

Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Patient Information

On the day of surgery

You will be asked to come to the Day Surgery Unit on the day of your operation. Unfortunately, we cannot say exactly what time you will be ready to go home.

Take any regular medications as usual unless specifically told not to do so.

You are having surgery under general anaesthesia meaning you will be asleep. It is important that you do not eat any food for 6 hours before your planned surgery time. You can have clear fluids (preferably water) up to 2 hours before surgery.

Your surgeon will discuss with you the symptoms that usually occur after the operation.

Here is a summary:

Pain

When the anaesthetic wears off the area will be sore and this may last for a few days. You should take some simple painkillers that you would normally take for headaches such as Paracetamol.

If you have had a tooth extracted and the pain is excessive and lasts longer than a few days then you may have a dry socket where the bone is exposed. You should contact the Out-Patient Department for an appointment.

Sickness

You may feel sick but this is normal. Do not rinse your mouth in the first 24 hours as this might disturb the blood clot. Take medication as instructed. Use antiseptic mouthwash such as Corsodyl or rinse your mouth with hot salt water.

Eat soft food until your mouth is comfortable and drink plenty of fluids. Brush your teeth, carefully avoiding the surgical site.

Bleeding

There may be some oozing for the first day after the surgery. Blood in the mouth mixes with saliva and appears worse than it is. Do not be alarmed. Identify the site of bleeding, place a clean handkerchief or piece of gauze over the area, and apply pressure by biting on it. Then lie down and relax. If after 30 minutes of constant pressure the area keeps bleeding, telephone Torbay Hospital and ask to speak to the Maxillofacial SHO On-Call.

Bruising

There may be some bruising of the skin inside your mouth. Sometimes bruising may even be seen on the face and neck. This will take a few days to settle.

Swelling

It is common to have some temporary swelling of the lips or cheeks and some difficulty in opening your mouth widely. This may develop 1 – 2 days after surgery and gets better in 7 – 10 days.

After your surgery

You will need to be taken home by a responsible adult who is able to stay with you overnight. Do not drive, operate machinery or make any important decisions for at least 48 hours.

Less common problems

Infection

An infection needing treatment can occur following surgery. Signs to look out for are:-

- Foul smell and foul taste from surgical site.
- Discharge from surgical site.
- **Pus filled swelling.**

Nerve damage

(Numbness of the lip, chin or tongue.)

You may have some partial loss of sensation and tingling or even complete numbness. In most cases this gets better quickly but can persist for some time and in a small number of cases, may be permanent.

Sinus Problems

Surgery in the upper jaw can set off sinusitis or cause communication between the mouth and air sinus in your cheek. If this happens we will tell you not to blow your nose for 2 weeks. We may also give you a course of antibiotics.

Thermal Sensitivity

Your teeth may be sensitive to hot and cold food and drink. This is normal and may take some time to settle.

Weakening of the jaw

Although very rare, removing impacted teeth can weaken the jaw, making it more susceptible to fracture.

We do not routinely review patients after mouth surgery, but if you have any problems you can contact us on the number below.

If you have persisting problems more than three weeks after surgery, or if you need further advice, then please contact us.

If you have any questions about this information leaflet please contact the Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Department

Tel. (01803) 655150

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.

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