

Before you have Surgery

This information has already been explained to you by your surgeon and this form is only a reminder. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask before your next visit. Surgery inside the mouth should be treated as seriously as any other surgical procedure. It is different for each person and may be easy or difficult. After surgery you may encounter some of the following side effects.

Swelling, Bruising and Pain – These may be variable from person to person and can be mild or severe. Any swelling and bruising that may arise will usually pass within 2-3 days after surgery although pain following surgery can persist for up to 2 weeks after.

Sinus Complications - Upper back teeth often lie close to, or in the sinus in the upper jaw. On removal of some upper teeth a hole, or communication can be left in this area. This may result in pain, a bad taste and fluid or air passing from the mouth to the nose. This will generally heal in a matter of weeks, but if it does not it may need to be repaired while you are asleep in hospital. Healing of this is less likely in smokers. In our practice this complication occurs in less than 1 in 1,000 extractions of teeth in the upper jaw.

Numbness – Following the extraction of lower wisdom teeth, you may be left with a numb or tingling sensation on your lip and/or tongue, not dissimilar to the sensation arising from a dental injection. This is because there are some nerves that run close to the roots of the lower back teeth and these nerves may be stretched or compressed when the wisdom tooth is removed. If this occurs the numb or tingling sensation may persist for some months before returning to 'normal'. Some patients notice a slight altered taste sensation. In a very small number of cases the nerve damage can be permanent. This complication occurs in less than 1 in 1,000 extractions of lower wisdom teeth in our practice.

- Dissolving Stitches may be placed which can still be present in the mouth for 2-6 weeks.
- Difficulty in opening your mouth fully may occur for up to one week.
- You may require some time off work (2-3 days is usually sufficient)
- You may have difficulty in eating normal foods for up to one week. Soft foods are advisable for the first few days.
- You may require antibiotics, but current best practice guidelines suggest that these should not be given routinely to everyone who has removal of wisdom teeth, or surgical removal of teeth.

In very rare cases, infection or swelling may occur – This may lead to admission to hospital for further surgical treatment. If this is required it will be arranged through the Emergency Dental Service or through the practice. This type of complication occurs in approximately two out of every one thousand cases in our practice.

It would be ideal, but not essential, to bring another responsible adult with you, and please do not bring your children with you to your appointment, as this may make your surgery more difficult. It would also be useful to obtain a packet of Ibuprofen painkillers before returning. These cannot be taken if you suffer from asthma or stomach ulcers. It may also be useful to buy a packet of normal paracetamol (500mg) tablets. It is useful to take some form of pain relief (preferably Ibuprofen) 30 minutes before your appointment time to ensure it is working as soon as possible following surgery.

It is essential that you do not smoke for at least four days after your surgery. Smoking leads to a slower and more painful recovery and also is bad for your general health. It increases the risk of infections and complications following surgery. If you would like advice on smoking cessation, please discuss this with the practice.

It is essential to ensure your mouth is kept extremely clean following surgery. To help this we suggest you obtain a bottle of Chlorhexidine mouthwash from the practice (if you do not pay for prescriptions you can be prescribed this). Start using this the day before your surgery appointment.

Smoking or failure to keep your mouth clean can result in severe infections, which in some cases may lead to admissions to hospital and further surgery.

Remember to eat normally before your appointment to avoid fainting.