

Aftercare following surgical treatment in your mouth

Removal of dressing

After a tooth extraction, some gauze is positioned on the wound in your mouth for you to bite down on. The gauze is replaced quite frequently. After the procedure, you need to bite down on the gauze for about 30 minutes and then you can remove it yourself.

Stitches

The used stitches tend to be dissolvable. This process generally takes about 2 weeks. The surgeon will inform you if non-dissolvable stitches were used and will arrange a check-up appointment for you.

Pain

The local anaesthetic usually wears off after 3 to 4 hours. It is advisable to take a painkiller before the local anaesthetic wears off. Ibuprofen is generally prescribed. It is best to take this painkiller with a meal. It can be combined with paracetamol.

You may experience 5 days of discomfort after a conventional extraction. The extraction of an enclosed wisdom tooth may cause a week to ten days of discomfort.

Swelling

The surgery may cause the cheek to swell. The cheek typically increases in volume for the first 48 hours after the procedure. The swelling will gradually subside during the following week. This is sometimes accompanied by the skin turning blue and then yellow.

Subsequent bleeding

Major bleeding can be stopped by the application of a gauze pad on the wound. You can keep the dressing in place for about 30 minutes afterwards by gently biting on it. It is important that you apply some pressure on the wound and you certainly do not rinse your mouth.

Brushing and rinsing

It is best not to brush or rinse your teeth for a day following the procedure. On the day after the procedure, it is advisable to brush your teeth well. After brushing you can rinse your mouth with a mouthwash. After a week to 10 days, you can stop the mouthwash.

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Food and drink

You can eat and drink once the anaesthesia has worn off about 4 hours after the procedure. It is not advisable to have any hot food the first day after the procedure, as this can cause bleeding and increase the swelling. You can have hot drinks and food again the following day.

Smoking has a negative impact on the healing of the wound and is best avoided for up to 5 days after the procedure.

Ice

We advise you to apply ice to the outside of the affected area for the first 6 to 8 hours. Keeping the area cool reduces any swelling as much as possible. It is not necessary to keep the ice pack in place continuously. 20 minutes per hour is fine.

Contact

You are advised to contact the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery department if:

- Your body temperature exceeds 39°C.
- The swelling or pain increases rather than subsides after about 5 days.
- The wound continues to bleed after applying pressure to the wound several times for half an hour.

Between 8am and 6pm: +32 (0)16 20 91 90

Outside department hours, you can contact the emergency services number +32 (0)16 20 92 80.

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