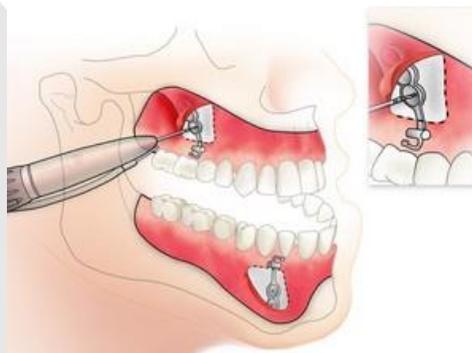


## The placement of a bone anchor

### What is a bone anchor?

A bone anchor is a small metal plate that is secured to the lower or upper jaw with 2 or 3 screws. Only the end is visible in the mouth. The orthodontist uses it to secure small elastic bands.



### The placement of a bone anchor

The oral and maxillofacial surgeon opens up the gums to secure the bone anchor's screws to the lower or upper jaw. The gums are then closed again with stitches.

The orthodontist usually requests the placement of several bone anchors. These can be done at the same time.

## Procedure aftercare

The first days after the procedure you should be careful around the wounds. Try not to move your tongue across the bone anchor too often.

### Pain and swelling

The local anaesthetic usually wears off after about 4 hours. Make sure you take a painkiller before this happens. It is usually enough to alternate ibuprofen and paracetamol for pain relief.

The procedure may cause the cheek to swell. The swelling will increase during the first 48 hours. The swelling will gradually subside during the following week. This is sometimes accompanied by the skin turning blue and then yellow. 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.

### 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.

You can also gently brush the part of the bone anchor that is showing in your mouth. It is best to use a soft toothbrush.

### Food and drink

Only have soft foods for the first 2 days. 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.

### Sports

You are advised not to engage in any sports for the first 10 days after the procedure.

## Stitches

The used stitches tend to be dissolvable. They usually disappear after 2 to 3 weeks.

## Check-up

There is no need for a check-up with the oral and maxillofacial doctor after the placement of the bone anchors. **However, you are advised to make an appointment with your orthodontist within the week.**

## Complications

Every procedure involves a risk of complications and the placement of bone anchors may cause problems.

### Subsequent bleeding

Your saliva may look a little red after the treatment. If there is major bleeding from the wound, it is best to contact our department.

Because the wound is sutured, the risk of any subsequent bleeding is small.

### Infection

If the swelling or pain increases rather than fades, please contact our department.

### Loosening of the bone anchor

Although this happens very rarely, a bone anchor may come loose. Depending on the stage of the treatment, the anchor is then secured again or removed.

## Contact

Contact our department if you experience one of the following symptoms:

- The bleeding does not stop.
- You have a temperature of 38.5°C or more.
- The swelling or pain increases rather than subsides after 4 to 5 days.
- The bone anchor comes loose.

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