



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Care of the mouth after dental extractions under local anaesthetic

Department of Maxillofacial Surgery

Patient information

## 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 do 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 lower lip, chin and tongue**

Following the dental extractions, you will be numb. If you have had extraction of lower wisdom teeth part of your lower lip, chin and tongue 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.

# 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 8am until 5pm** please telephone the Maxillofacial clinic where your procedure was carried out:

**Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton**

**01273 696955 Ext. 64813**

**Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath**

**01444 441881 Ext. 68308**

**Maxillo facial secretaries for general queries**

**01273 696955 Ext. 63695, Ext. 64756**

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 5pm until 8am.**

**Weekend hours, Friday, 5pm to Monday, 8am.**

**Public holidays, 24 hours cover.**

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

**This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath**

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