Removal of teeth under local anaesthetic

Department of Maxillofacial Surgery

Patient information

This leaflet has been designed to improve your understanding of any forthcoming treatment and contains answers to many of the commonly asked questions.
If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer or would like further explanation please ask.

Why do my teeth need to be extracted?

There are many reasons as to why teeth need to be removed. Often it is due to significant decay or infection of the tooth. The reasons for removal of your tooth would have been discussed with you by the doctor on the day of your assessment. If you are not happy that you understand why your tooth needs to be removed then please ask.

How does the local anaesthetic work?

On your assessment it has been discussed to extract your tooth under local anaesthetic. This is an injection into the gum surrounding the tooth, similar to that you may have had at your dentist for a filling. The injection takes a couple of minutes to numb the area and means that you will feel no pain while the tooth is removed. The are of the injection will stay numb for a few hours or even longer after the procedure as a result of the local anaesthetic. **Please eat before the procedure as normal.**

What will the procedure involve?

The procedure either involves simple removal of the tooth out of its socket or, sometimes, a cut in the gum over the tooth and removal of some bone surrounding the crown of the tooth.

It may become necessary to cut the tooth into 2 or 3 pieces to remove it. Once the tooth has been removed the gum is put back into place with stitches. In the majority of cases these stitches are dissolvable and can take up to two weeks to dissolve.

How long does it take to remove a tooth?

This is a variable. Some teeth may take only a few minutes to remove. More difficult wisdom teeth can take up to 40 minutes to extract.

Are there any risks?

With dental extractions there is a risk of pain, bleeding, bruising, stiffness in opening the mouth, swelling and infection.

Is there much pain or swelling after the removal of teeth?

It is likely that there will be some discomfort and swelling both on the inside and outside of your mouth after surgery. This is usually worse for the first three days but it may take up to two weeks before all the soreness goes. You may also find that your jaw is stiff and you may need to eat a soft diet for a week or so. It is likely you will need regular painkillers for 3-4 days after the procedure. It may also be necessary for you to have a course of antibiotics after the extraction. There may be some bruising of the skin of your face that can take up to a fortnight to fade away.

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

CPIG
carer and patient information group approved