



Surgery in the mouth: aftercare advice

Information for patient from Day Surgery

After your surgery it is normal to have some swelling of your face and to have difficulty opening your mouth. The swelling usually starts to go down after two or three days. You may also experience bruising on your face and neck, which can spread to the upper part of your chest. This is normal. The following instructions should help your wound to heal.

When you get home and for the first few days after your surgery

- **Do not** smoke for at least 48 hours after your surgery.
- **Do not** eat or drink hot or fridge cold food/drink for the rest of the day, after your surgery, as this will encourage your wound to bleed.
- **Do not** drink alcohol for 24 hours after your surgery.
- **Rest!** Avoid any strenuous activities, such as housework or sport, for the first 24 hours after your surgery. Any increase in your blood pressure will encourage your wound to bleed.
- **Leave it alone!** Poking your wound with your fingers or tongue will only delay healing and encourage bleeding.

When can I eat again?

For the first 48 hours after your surgery we advise you to only eat a soft diet (for example mashed potato, scrambled eggs, or yoghurt). Avoid any small foods, such as rice or peas, until your wound has healed. Also avoid sharp foods, such as crisps, as they may hurt your wound and cause unnecessary pain.

How do I keep my mouth clean after surgery?

Start warm salt water mouth rinses the day after your surgery. Dissolve one teaspoon of salt into a cup or glass of cooled, boiled water and rinse your mouth gently before spitting the water out. Do this regularly throughout the day, especially after eating. Continue doing this until your wound has healed.

It should be possible to clean your teeth gently, in other parts of your mouth, with a toothbrush.



Will I be in pain after my surgery?

You will probably feel some discomfort following your surgery. This can usually be helped by taking paracetamol (as directed). We advise you to start taking the painkillers as your anaesthetic starts to wear off.

How long should I take the antibiotics for?

If you were prescribed antibiotics by the hospital, you **must** take the full course of these, as instructed by your doctor. If you have been prescribed Metronidazole, you must not drink alcohol. If you develop a reaction, such as a rash or feeling sick, please contact your GP or one of the Day Surgery Centres listed below.

What if my wound bleeds when I get home?

It is not uncommon for your wound to bleed slightly as the anaesthetic wears off. If this happens, dampen a piece of gauze/cloth (**not** cotton wool or tissue) with water and bite on it. If your wound continues to bleed after 20 minutes of continued pressure with the gauze, please contact one of the Day Surgery Centres listed below.

What if I have any questions or concerns?

If you have any queries (especially if you are getting increasing pain, redness, or swelling after 48 hours) please do not hesitate to contact Day Surgery on the numbers below or your GP.

- Channel Day Surgery, **William Harvey Hospital**, Ashford
Telephone: 01233 61 62 63 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- Canterbury Day Surgery Centre, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**
Telephone: 01227 78 31 14 (7:30am to 8pm)
Telephone: 07887 68 76 45 (8pm to 7:30am)
- Day Surgery Unit, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital**, Margate
Telephone: 01843 23 44 99 (7:30am to 8pm)
Telephone: 07887 65 11 62 (8pm to 7:30am)

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.