

Surgical procedure in the mouth

Introduction

You have just undergone a surgical procedure in your mouth and now have a small wound, which has probably been stitched. This leaflet explains what you can expect after the procedure.

Pain

The local anaesthetic will wear off within two to four hours. You should expect some pain from the operation site for three to seven days. Pain-killers should help to relieve this pain. You have been given instructions about pain relief. You may also have been given a prescription. It is best to start taking pain-killers before the anaesthetic wears off completely.

Post-operative bleeding

2 | The wound may continue to bleed for an hour or so after the procedure, but this should soon pass. Your saliva may be blood stained for a day or two after the procedure. If the wound starts to bleed after this, or the bleeding increases, you should take the following measures: clean and dry your mouth with a piece of gauze or a clean hanky. Do not rinse it! Take a second piece of gauze and fold it into a pad. If you don't have any gauze, tie a knot in a clean hanky. Place the gauze or hanky on the wound and bite down on it for thirty minutes. Exert constant pressure on the wound. If it is still bleeding after this, please contact us. You will find the telephone numbers at the end of this leaflet.

Swelling

Swelling is common and tends to be worst two or three days after surgery, reducing over about a week. There may also be some bruising. This can occur on the cheek, face and occasionally on the upper part of the neck.

Difficulty opening your mouth

This is a common after-effect, particularly if the procedure was in the back of your mouth. You should be able to open your mouth normally after a few days. In the meantime, practice opening and closing of your mouth gently. Soft diet is advisable for the first two days. You don't need to miss meals. Eat normal portions at regular mealtimes.

After-care Oral hygiene

It is better not to rinse your mouth on the day after the procedure. You may clean your teeth, but be careful when brushing the area around the wound. If you have been given a prescription for chlorhexidine 0.2% mouthwash, you should rinse your mouth with it several times a day, starting on the second day after the procedure.

Cigarettes and alcohol

It is better to avoid cigarettes and alcohol on the days after the procedure as they can impede the healing process.

Stitches

Any stitches usually dissolve and disappear within one to two weeks. It is possible that stitches may come loose or be lost immediately after surgery, this does not normally cause a problem. Sometimes it is necessary to use non-resorbable stitches. In this case, we will make an appointment with you to remove the stitches.

When to contact us?

- Your temperature may be slightly raised at first. If your temperature goes above 39°C, please contact us.
- You should also contact us if the swelling or pain in your cheek does not recede but gets worse after four to five days.

- If you have any questions or concerns please contact us during office hours on +31 (0)512 588 802, and outside office hours on +31 (0)512 588 888. The switchboard will page the oncall Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery specialist. See also www.nijsmellinghe.nl/zorg/afdelingen/mondziektenkaak-en-aangezichtchirurgie