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Minor Oral Surgery



Patient information

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Excellent patient care, together

This leaflet has been designed to improve your understanding of your forthcoming treatment and has answers to many of the commonly asked questions. Please ask if you have any other questions would like further explanation please ask.

What is Minor Oral Surgery?

Minor oral surgery is a procedure performed under local anaesthetic or sedation to remove teeth or biopsy for investigative analysis.

What type of anaesthetic is used?

A number of options are available and depend on how difficult the tooth is to remove.

- **Local anaesthetic** – this is an injection into gum surrounding the tooth, rather like 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. This is the best option for teeth that are simple to remove.
- **Local anaesthetic and oral sedation** – in addition to a local anaesthetic injection you can be given a tablet one hour before. This makes you feel relaxed and less aware of the procedure.
- **Local anaesthetic and intravenous sedation** – in addition to a local anaesthetic injection you can be given an injection into your arm. This makes you feel relaxed and less aware of the procedure.

For both types of sedation, you must be accompanied to this appointment by a relative or friend who can look after you for up to 24 hours after surgery. You will not be able to drive yourself home and are advised not to sign any legally binding agreement or carry out tasks requiring motor skills up to 24 hours after sedation.

How long does it take to remove a tooth?

This is variable. Some teeth may take only a few minutes to remove. More difficult teeth that need to be cut into pieces to remove can take around 30 minutes to extract.

Can I drive home after a minor oral surgery procedure?

It will be safe to drive home if the procedure is performed under local anaesthetic.

If it is done under sedation, it will be essential to have someone to drive you home afterwards. The after effects of the sedative cause drowsiness which can last for several hours.

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 couple of days, but it may take up to a week 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. If it is likely to be sore your surgeon will advise painkillers for you. It may also be necessary for you to have a course of antibiotics after the extraction, depending on infection or complexity. There may be some bruising of the skin of your face that can take up to a fortnight to fade away.

How to look after the extraction site:

- Until the local anaesthetic wears off, be careful not to bite on the numb or surrounding area.
- Do not eat or drink for one to two hours. Avoid eating on the affected side for a couple of days. Stick to a soft diet for a few days and avoid eating anything too hot or too hard. Avoid alcohol for at least 24 hours.
- Avoid smoking for a couple of days or up to a week if possible as this decreases healing potential and increases the risk of infection.
- Avoid exercise or over exertion.
- Maintain good oral hygiene. Brush your teeth carefully and thoroughly. If necessary, soften the toothbrush under a hot tap before using it.
- Try to keep your mouth as clean as possible. After 24 hours, start warm saltwater mouthwashes (one level teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water) should be used after meals day for five days.
- You can also use the antiseptic mouthwash Chlorhexidine (marketed as Corsodyl) diluted to half strength with warm water, once a day, last thing at night.
- You may have some stitches. They are resorbable and may fall out over the next few days. If this happens, do not worry – there will be no adverse effect on healing.

You will only be discharged from the clinic when the bleeding has stopped. It is normal to expect blood-stained saliva. In the unlikely event of further bleeding, apply pressure to the site with gauze provided or a clean handkerchief, for 15–20 minutes. The gauze/handkerchief needs to be folded quite thick and held in place continuously. If this method does not control the bleeding, seek advice from the telephone numbers on the page over.

How to contact us

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

[Watford General Hospital](#)

Vicarage Road

Watford

Hertfordshire WD1 8HB

Monday to Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm

Tel: 01923 217205

Hospital switchboard: 01923 244366 - Ext. 3855

After 5pm and at weekends

Northwick Park Hospital

Tel: 020 8864 3232

Ask for bleep number 900, ask for the Oral Surgery SHO on call

Taken from The British Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons website. www.baoms.org.uk

PALS

If you need this leaflet in another **language, large print, Braille or audio version**, please call **01923 217198** or email westherts.pals@nhs.net.



Language



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Survey - Friends and Family Test

We welcome feedback about your care, this feedback is shared with all staff we can improve patients' experience. Click this [link](#) or use the QR code with your smartphone.



For more information, on our Patient Advice and Liaison Service, visit our [website](#).
Or type in: bit.ly/4o3QVFJ

Where can I park?

Car parking at Watford General Hospital is available in the [multi-storey car park](#). It's pay on exit, so you only pay for the time you need. You can pay by cash or card. The post code for the car park is **WD18 0LT**.

The external car park ticket machines on all sites **only accept cash**. However, you can pay by card via the [Saba parking app](#) (excluding AMEX), or search Saba parking app at the [App store](#) or [Google play](#).

Please note: due to current redevelopment works at St Albans, parking is very limited.

For more information about travelling to our sites and travel concessions, visit our [website](#).

Department	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
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