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Post Operative
Instructions after
Orthognathic Surgery

After your operation

You will wake up in the recovery area next to the operating theatre. As soon as you are stable you will be taken to the ward.

Pain Relief

We will give you pain relief and anti-inflammatory medication and also antibiotics to reduce the risk of infection.

Swelling

Swelling around your jaws is most noticeable for the first 48 hours after your operation and we may give you ice packs to help reduce this. After 48 hours the swelling will reduce further but it may take several weeks to disappear completely.

Stiffness

Stiffness of the jaw is common and you will not be able to open your mouth fully for a few weeks.

Diet

You will only be able to eat soft food for the first few weeks after your operation e.g. soups, purees and smoothies. Drinking through a straw at first may help.

Dry Lips

You will need to use a lip balm or Vaseline frequently to prevent you lips from drying out and cracking.

Blocked Nose

You will have a blocked nose and blood stained discharge from your nose and mouth for a few days. Please do not blow your nose after your operation.

Feeling Low

This is normal after the operation, often on or about the third day lasting for a few days. You may feel tearful, again this is normal as you are recovering from major surgery.

Oral Hygiene

This is extremely important to aid fast recovery and prevent infection.

- **No smoking.** Smoking significantly reduces blood supply in the mouth and slows down healing process.
- **Tooth brushing.** Brushing with a soft brush is recommended as soon as possible after your operation. Although uncomfortable, this will be useful for your oral health and will not cause you any harm. You may find it useful to use a child's toothbrush.
- We also recommend a **mouthwash** such as corsodyl to be used for about 10 days after the operation.
- You will also need to do regular **warm saltwater** mouthwashes.
- The **stitches** are dissolvable and can take up to 4 weeks or more to disappear. It is best to leave them alone.
- **Fixed braces** are normally removed approximately 6-9 months after your operation. And retainers will be fitted at this stage.
- Alcohol is to be avoided.

Elastics

You may wake up with elastics in your mouth. This is normal.

Over the course of the upcoming months to finishing your treatment you will be expected to wear a combination of elastics full time or part time to aid in fine tuning your bite in to its new position. Failure to cooperate will lead to delay treatment or an unfinished result.

Going Home

You must arrange for someone to take you home. It is essential for someone to be at home with you and look after you for the first week after leaving the hospital.

The following checklist will help you to ensure you have the things you need at home:

- Choose clothes that are easy to wear. Pulling clothes over your head may be awkward at first.
- Salt-for salty water mouthwashes
- Blender- so that you can puree your food. Soups, smoothies and ice cream are all easy to eat. Straws are helpful.
- Remember drink plenty of water and fluids.
- Ice packs for swelling.
- Child toothbrush and some corsodyl mouthwash.
- Vaseline/lip balm for dry lips
- Some good DVDs and other treats.

What to do in an emergency?

If you suspect you have an emergency to do with the surgery such as: pain, swelling, bleeding etc. Please contact the Surgeon, however if you have an emergency to do with the brace then please contact the Practice.