Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Instructions Following Extractions and Surgical Procedures

Version number: **9**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

Instructions Following Extractions & Surgical Procedures

Patient Information

Maxillo Facial - Head and Neck Services

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For the remainder of today

- Avoid hot food/drinks as the area will be numb for several hours.
- For at least 24 hours avoid spitting/rinsing out the mouth.
- For at least 3 days avoid alcohol and smoking as this will affect the healing process.
- Avoid excessive exercise and sport.
- Take painkillers before the numbness has worn off, as the area will be tender.
- Ice packs can be used externally over your face/cheek to help reduce swelling.

After 24 hours

Do:

- Rinse the mouth with warm salty water (one teaspoon of salt per tumbler) for several minutes. This will speed up the healing, ease any soreness and help keep the mouth clean. Use the saltwater mouthwash as often as you can over the next week, especially after meals.
- Brush teeth gently.
- Stay hydrated! Drink plenty of cool fluids.
- Eat soft foods.
- Keep away from the surgery area e.g. tongue in socket.

If bleeding/swelling occurs:

- Don’t panic/sit down.
- Roll up swabs provided or a clean cloth, place over the socket and bite down hard for 15 to 20 minutes.
- Remove swab/cloth and the bleeding should have stopped, if not repeat for another 15 to 20 minutes.
- If bleeding persists, contact the Maxillo-Facial Unit.
- Use icepacks if swelling occurs.
- For a few days after your surgical procedure, you may notice blood on your pillow when you wake up in the morning. This is normal and you may like to use an old towel to protect your pillowcase. You may require up to one week off from work following a surgical procedure. The surgeon completing your treatment will advise you on this.

Maxillo-Facial Unit - Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm telephone 01942 822487

Outside the hours stated above telephone the Accident & Emergency Department on

01942 244000.

Pain

Pain control is important after surgery. Once the local anaesthetic has worn off you are likely to experience pain/discomfort, and this can last up to 1 week. The effect of the anaesthetic usually lasts for 2 – 3 hours. It is advisable to take painkillers before the anaesthetic wears off. Over the counter painkillers are usually sufficient, unless prescribed otherwise by treating doctor.

Sutures (Stitches)

Sutures may be placed if needed. These tend to be dissolvable and can take up to 10 days to dissolve. We advise that if the sutures are still there after 14 days, then to gently brush them with a soft toothbrush to help with the dissolving process.

Warfarin/Clopidogrel (and any other blood thinning medication)

Patients on who are on blood thinning medication will be told by the surgeon carrying out the procedure when to restart taking their medication if this was stopped prior to surgery,

Post- operative Complications

It is unfortunate that in some cases a complication can occur where the blood clot is lost. This is sometimes caused by smoking or rinsing out before the 24-hour recommendation. This is called a ‘dry socket’. It is very painful and needs to be reviewed by the Maxillo-Facial team to place a sedative dressing in the area where the tooth has been removed.



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