Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Dressing Plate Instructions

Version number: **7**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

Dressing Plate Instructions

Patient Information

Maxillo Facial – Head and Neck Services

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Benefit of the procedure

Because one or other of your teeth have developed in the wrong place it is necessary as part of your on-going orthodontic treatment to help the tooth grow into the mouth.

The procedure

To help this tooth grow you could have a minor surgical procedure. This usually takes place under local anaesthetic or a general anaesthetic. While you are under the anaesthetic, the surgeon will push the gum lying over the tooth back.

Once the tooth has been uncovered it is important that the gum doesn't grow back over the tooth. To do this the surgeon will either fit a:

Bracket and chain

A small bracket is glued to the tooth. Attached to this is a chain which your orthodontist can then use to pull the tooth into the right position, or a

Dressing plate

The gum will be cut over the tooth and a plastic 'dressing' plate put in place to cover the area. This plate is held in your mouth with clips that attach to your back molar teeth. It is important that you wear the plate all the time except when you take it out to clean your teeth. Without the plate the gum may grow back, making it difficult for the orthodontist to move the tooth into position.

After four days take out the dressing plate using the metal clasps at the back and clean the dressing plate with your tooth brush and put it straight back into your mouth. Rinse with warm salty mouthwash and put it back into your mouth until you attend for your next visit with the orthodontist or surgeon.

You will need to return within two weeks after surgery to have the area checked by your orthodontist or surgeon. Further appointments after this will obviously be necessary for your on-going orthodontic care.

Risks

The above procedures are not particularly painful, but you may experience some bleeding, discomfort or pain afterwards. There is usually very little in the way of swelling. If it is likely to be sore your surgeon will arrange painkillers for you. It is not usually necessary to take antibiotics.

In some rare cases the gum can re-grow over the tooth and the procedure may have to be repeated.

Alternative

If the tooth is left alone, it may not grow normally and could either damage the roots of the front teeth or push them out of position. This can affect the look and the alignment of your teeth.

Contact information

If you are experiencing any problems, you can contact the Maxillo-Facial Unit telephone

01942 822487

The Department is open Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm.



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