



Surgery in the mouth: aftercare advice

Information for patients from Day Surgery

You have had surgery in your mouth. This leaflet explains:

- what you can and cannot do for the first 24 to 48 hours after you return home
- when you can start eating again
- how to manage any pain, and
- how to look after your wound.

If after reading this leaflet you have any questions, please contact your GP or Day Surgery. The Day Surgery contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

My face is swollen, is this normal?

After surgery, it is normal to have some **swelling** of your face and to have difficulty opening your mouth. The swelling usually starts to go down after two or three days.

You may also have **bruising** on your face and neck, which can spread to the upper part of your chest. This is also normal.

Please follow the advice in this leaflet, as it will help your wound to heal.

When you get home and for the first two days after your surgery

- **Do not smoke** for at least 48 hours after your surgery.
- After your surgery, **do not eat or drink hot or fridge cold food / drink for the rest of the day**, as this will encourage your wound to bleed.
- **Do not drink alcohol** for 24 hours after your surgery.
- **Rest.** For the first 24 hours avoid any strenuous activities, such as housework or sport. Any increase in your blood pressure will encourage your wound to bleed.

- **Leave your wound alone.** Poking your wound with your fingers or tongue will only delay healing and encourage bleeding.

When can I eat again?

- For the first 48 hours after your surgery only eat a soft diet (for example mashed potato, scrambled eggs, or yoghurt).
- Avoid any small foods until your wound has healed, such as peas and rice.
- Also avoid sharp foods, such as crisps, as they may hurt your wound and cause unnecessary pain.

How do I keep my mouth clean after surgery?

Start warm salt water mouth rinses **24 hours after your surgery.**

- Dissolve one teaspoon of salt into a cup or glass of cooled, boiled water.
- Rinse your mouth gently before spitting the water out.
- Do this regularly throughout the day, especially after eating.
- Continue doing this until your wound has healed.

It should be possible to clean your teeth gently with a toothbrush, in other parts of your mouth.

Will I be in pain after my surgery?

You may feel some discomfort following your surgery. To help with this discomfort take paracetamol as your anaesthetic starts to wear off. Please read the instructions that come with the paracetamol before you start taking them.

How long should I take the antibiotics for?

If the hospital prescribed you antibiotics, you must take the full course of these as instructed by your doctor. If you develop a reaction, such as a rash or feeling sick, please contact your GP or one of the Day Surgery Centres listed below.

What if my wound bleeds when I get home?

It is not uncommon for your wound to bleed slightly as the anaesthetic wears off. If this happens, dampen a piece of gauze / cloth with water and bite on it. **Do not use cotton wool or tissue.**

If your wound continues to bleed after 20 minutes of continued pressure with the gauze, please contact one of the Day Surgery Centres listed below.

What if I have any questions or concerns?

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact Day Surgery on the numbers below or your GP. This is especially important if you are getting increasing pain, redness, or swelling after 48 hours.

- Canterbury Day Surgery Centre, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**, Canterbury
Telephone: 01227 783114 (7:30am to 8pm)
Telephone: 07887 687645 (8pm to 7:30am)
- Day Surgery, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) Hospital**, Margate
Telephone: 01843 234499 (7:30am to 8pm)
Telephone: 07887 651162 (8pm to 7:30am)
- Channel Day Surgery, **William Harvey Hospital**, Ashford
Telephone: 01233 616263 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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