



Bath Oral Surgery Clinic

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Frequently asked questions

Soft Tissue Procedures

What is a soft tissue procedure?

A soft tissue procedure is one that does not involve teeth or bone.

Why am I having a soft tissue procedure?

Typically, such a procedure is required to investigate lesions affecting the lining of the mouth. It might involve the complete removal of a lesion such as a small swelling or alternatively, a representative piece might be taken of a larger or more widespread lesion for the purposes of investigation.

The soft tissue that has been removed will be sent to an appropriate laboratory for examination under a microscope. A report will then be prepared regarding the nature of the lesion.

How long will the operation take?

An appointment for such a procedure under local anaesthesia usually lasts 30 minutes. A further appointment will be organized once the report is available from the laboratory to discuss this and to review the healing at the operation site.

Will there be any stitches?

Sometimes stitches are needed and they are usually dissolvable.

If non-dissolvable stitches are used, they are quick and easy to remove. An appointment will be arranged for this, usually one week after surgery.

Will I be in pain afterwards?

You should not feel any pain immediately after the operation as the area of surgery will be numb from the local anaesthetic. As the numbness wears off, the area might become uncomfortable and then you should take painkillers. We will supply you with these, with information about doses.

Could there be any after-effects?

This depends on the operation. If there are any issues in particular to be aware of, they will be discussed with you beforehand. There may be swelling and bruising in the area of surgery, as well as some discomfort; the bruising is usually at its most obvious two to three days after surgery.

In the longer term, there may be a small amount of scarring at the operation site once it has healed.

When can I return to work?

This depends on your occupation and how you are after your treatment; it may be possible for you to return to work the next day. We will give you appropriate advice for your particular circumstances.

After your operation

After your surgery, we will give you an information sheet with instructions to help bring about a quick recovery. We will discuss this with you before you are discharged home, to ensure that the information is clear and understood. The main points are as follows.

On the day of the operation

- **Get plenty of rest** in the first few hours after your operation.

- **Do not rinse your mouth** or drink hot fluids.
- **Relieve discomfort** by taking the supplied painkillers as directed and use ice packs to reduce discomfort at the operation site.

From the following day

- **Keep your mouth as clean as possible** by gently brushing your teeth as usual.
- **Use salt water mouth rinses** (one teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) every four hours for seven days. This will help to keep the operation site clean and clear of debris.
- **Avoid smoking.** The local action of nicotine in the mouth has been shown to have a detrimental effect on healing after surgery and greatly increases the likelihood of wound infection developing.
- **Continue to take the painkillers** and any other supplied medications as directed and use ice packs for the next two to three days.
- **If bleeding is troublesome**, you can usually control it by placing dampened gauze over the wound and applying pressure for 15 to 20 minutes (slight oozing can be expected for a short time following surgery).

If you have any other complications or require advice after treatment, please call **07790 203198** and leave a message including a contact telephone number. We will return your call as soon as we can.