



Bath Oral Surgery Clinic

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Frequently asked questions

The surgical removal of teeth

Why am I having my tooth removed surgically?

There can be several reasons for having to remove a tooth surgically.

Typically, the tooth is extensively decayed or fractured and is causing chronic infection and discomfort.

Surgical removal is needed when simple extraction is not possible because of the condition of the tooth.

How long will the operation take?

This depends on the position of your tooth or teeth and whether the operation is being carried out with local anaesthesia alone or with additional intravenous sedation.

An appointment for surgery under local anaesthesia usually lasts 45 minutes. When intravenous sedation is used, an appointment usually lasts 90 minutes. The longer time allows for the recovery period needed before you can be discharged home.

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 which might limit jaw opening. Bruising is usually at its most obvious two to three days after surgery and varies between patients. It normally resolves itself after 10 to 14 days.

The removal of buried or impacted teeth or roots may be followed by altered sensation in the area of surgery. This is due to the bruising affecting the nerves that carry sensation from that area. This is usually only a temporary condition although it can take up to six months to fully resolve itself.

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.

Some people need to take some time off work, especially if the operation has been carried out under intravenous sedation. 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.