

Discharge information following a Mandibulectomy

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about what to expect following your mandibulectomy.

Follow up appointments

- If you have stitches or clips are in place, you will be asked to arrange an appointment with the practice nurse at your GP's surgery to remove them 7 to 10 days after surgery.
- The consultant will see you in an outpatient clinic 2 weeks after your discharge to review your progress.
- The Head and Neck speech and language therapists and dietitians will have talked to you about the food you can safely manage when you have been discharged. They will also review your progress in a joint outpatient appointment to help build up your diet.

What to expect following discharge

- You may find that the skin around your jaw/neck might be numb after the surgery. This may persist for several months. The numbness may improve gradually, but you should not expect it to disappear completely.
- The marginal mandibular nerve, which helps you to move the muscles in your face, may be damaged during surgery. If it is damaged your lower lip will be a little weak. The speech and language therapists will give you exercises that will help your lip become stronger. Please be aware that if the nerves in your lip are damaged, they may never completely return to normal.
- The muscles of your jaw will be affected by the surgery and you may experience pain or difficulty opening your mouth wide. The speech and language therapists will be able to help with this.
- **As long as you are careful**, you can still brush your teeth. A soft toothbrush is usually best at first.

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Head and Neck/
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Patient Information

What to do if you have a problem at home

- **Pain** – If you are experiencing pain that is not being controlled with the pain relief you have been sent home with then please contact your GP for advice. The Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) can also advise you.
- **Swelling** – This is to be expected following a mandibulectomy and will slowly reduce over time. However, if the swelling worsens, please contact the Head and Neck CNS for advice.
If the swelling starts to affect your ability to breathe, please call 999 and ask for an ambulance.
- **Bleeding** – Slight bleeding may happen due to irritation when eating, this should settle. If you are concerned, please contact the Head and Neck CNS for advice. However, if the bleeding continues or you are bleeding large volumes, please go to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department or call 999 for an ambulance.
- **Infection** – If you have any signs of infection such as a raised temperature, redness, new pain or a discoloured discharge then contact the Head and Neck CNS for advice. Out of normal working hours please contact the nursing staff on Ward 2b.

Contact Information

Clinical Nurse Specialists

Tel: 0300 422 6785

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

Head and Neck Dietitian

Tel: 0300 422 3460

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

Head and Neck Speech and Language Therapists

Tel: 0300 422 8105

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

Out of Hours - Ward 2b

Tel: 0300 422 6184

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Making a choice

Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>