



Oral surgery

This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions that you/ your child may have about their operation. You will also have an opportunity to discuss any further queries or concerns with hospital staff on admission.

A general anaesthetic requires your child to be starved beforehand.

Morning admission:

Last food: 2.30am

Breastfeed: 4.30am

Water or weak squash until 7.30am

Afternoon admission:

Last food: 7.30am

Breastfeed: 9.30am

Water or weak squash until 12.30pm

Please be aware that milk and chewing gum is considered food.

If you do not follow these instructions your child's procedure may be delayed or even cancelled.

Why does my child need oral surgery?

Your child may need oral surgery for a number of different reasons – e.g. to remove a diseased tooth, to uncover an impacted tooth, to take a biopsy (tissue sample), release a tongue tie or to drain an abscess.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

You will probably have discussed or even tried alternative treatments, such as medication, for your child's condition before surgery was recommended.

What are the risks of the surgery?

Oral surgery is generally very safe, but most procedures have some risks. Please speak to your child's oral surgeon before the operation if you have any worries about these risks.

Every anaesthetic carries a risk, but this is small. The anaesthetic will be given by an anaesthetist (a specially trained doctor). After having an anaesthetic some children may feel sick or vomit. They may have a headache, sore throat, feel dizzy or be upset. These side effects are usually not severe and are short-lived.

What shall I bring to hospital?

For some children it is reassuring if they can bring a familiar toy from home. A play specialist may be involved in your child's care, and they will be able to provide a range of suitable toys and

activities. A hospital gown will be provided to wear to theatre. However, children may want to bring their own nightwear, slippers and dressing gown to change into afterwards.

What happens on admission?

The surgeon will explain the procedure to you on the ward, and can discuss any worries that you may have. An anaesthetist will also visit you to explain the anaesthetic. **If your child has any medical problems, for instance, allergies, please tell the surgeon and anaesthetist about these.** Your child may also have 'magic cream' (local anaesthetic) applied to the back of their hands so that the anaesthetic injection will be less painful. One parent/carer will be able to accompany your child to the anaesthetic room and stay with them until they are asleep.

What happens after the operation?

After your child has had their operation they will be taken into the recovery room to wake up. Once they are sufficiently recovered, you may be able to accompany the nurse to collect them and bring them back to the ward. Children are given pain relief during their operation. If necessary, further pain relief will be given on the ward. It is possible that your child may vomit following surgery – medicine can be given to relieve this if the vomiting persists.

When can we go home?

Your child may go home when both you and the staff are happy that they have recovered sufficiently. They should be awake and comfortable, and must have had something to eat and drink before we will let them go home.

Advice following oral surgery

- On the day your child goes home do not allow your child to have any hot or very cold drinks. All drinks must be swallowed straight away and not spat out or rinsed around the mouth. Please do not use a straw as this may restart any bleeding.
- Your child may experience some pain or discomfort. You may give paracetamol (Calpol), available 'over the counter', following the dosage on the bottle.
- The day following surgery your child will need to rinse their mouth with warm salt mouthwash. This should be done four times a day – especially after meals. The mouthwash is made by dissolving one teaspoon of salt in a tumbler of warm water (not hot water).
- If your child's tooth socket starts to bleed, they need to bite on a clean dry cotton roll or a folded handkerchief but NOT tissue. They need to keep this in place for at least 10 minutes or until the bleeding stops.
- It is essential that your child continues to brush their teeth and maintain good oral hygiene.
- There may be some swelling or bruising to your child's face the day after surgery. This will settle down within five days.
- If the bonded chain (oral device) becomes loose or detached, contact the Oral Surgery Department on the number listed below.
- If a follow-up appointment is required, it will be sent to you in the post.
- One or two days off school are normally sufficient for recovery and then your child may resume all normal activities.

Contacting us

If you experience any excessive pain, swelling or bleeding, contact us on: 0118 322 8978
Monday–Friday 8.15am-5pm.

Out of hours please go to the Emergency Department (A&E) where you will be seen by an emergency doctor.

For advice out of hours please phone the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford on 0300 304 7777 where there is a maxillofacial team on-call out of hours.

- Pre-clerking nurse: 0118 322 7518
- Kempton Day Bed Unit: 0118 322 7512

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Paediatric Unit, February 2025

Next review due: February 2027