

PATIENT ADVICE FOLLOWING DENTAL IMPLANT OR COMPLEX SURGERY

This is a guide to what to expect following dental implant or complex surgery. Although you may have had fewer treatments than those included on this sheet, the advice for all surgery is the same.

Immediately after your operation

Following surgery, you will probably feel tired, a little swollen and have a tingling feeling as the local anaesthetic wears off. You should expect a feeling of tiredness to last for the next week or so.

Your post-surgery pack will contain:

- [A cold pack
- [Prescribed antibiotics, pain relief and guidelines for its use
- [A soft toothbrush

Make sure you rest as much as possible as this will prevent bleeding and speed up healing. You will probably have to eat soft foods and soups for the next two or three weeks. If you have had immediate implant-retained crowns or bridges fitted, it is vital that you do not chew or bite down on these too heavily. You may have to stick with soft foods for at least three months until impressions are taken.

Treat areas that have had surgery with great care. Whether a synthetic or PRF membrane has been used, we recommend gently rinsing your mouth with a warm salt mouthwash. Let this 'pool' around the sites of surgery and do **not** flush the mouthwash between your teeth, implants or bridgework. It is also a good idea to avoid brushing both your gums and teeth in these areas until your review appointment.

Use of our post-surgery cold pack can significantly reduce post-operative swelling, pain and the likelihood of bruising but please use it carefully so you don't cause a cold 'burn' on your cheek and lip tissues. Often it is best to use these packs when they become slightly more pliable rather than when frozen solid.

Two to three weeks later

During your review appointments, we will check how you are healing and inform you of your progress. We will also ask you to run a soft toothbrush very gently across your gum tissues.

The tissues are still weak and some sutures may remain in place as these will usually dissolve. Unless we have removed the redundant sutures, please leave them alone and try not keep touching them with your tongue.

After one month

By this time, your tissues should be well healed and you should be able to brush gently, but thoroughly, around your surgical sites. We will offer advice regarding any additional cleaning that may be required. Do not use interdental brushes unless we tell you to do so.

Take great care when eating and continue to consume soft foods and soups, especially if you have immediate bridgework or crowns, as the developing bone can be disrupted by chewing on your temporary teeth.

Generally, we will review your progress at six to eight weeks. Then, unless you have any specific problems, we will normally schedule your impression appointment no earlier than twelve weeks following your surgery. Impressions are needed to make custom trays in readiness for the restorative stage.

After three months

If both healing and osseointegration have been successful, we will go ahead with taking impressions so your permanent prosthesis (bridgework) can be made. This will take three to four visits and will involve:

- [Taking impressions with possible soft tissue manipulation.
- [Checking the accuracy of your implants.
- [Ensuring the accuracy of the occlusion (bite) and making sure the shape and colour of your new teeth are correct.
- [Fitting your definitive bridgework, while carefully checking your occlusion, the appearance and other important components of your restorative treatment.

A review appointment will normally be arranged for four to eight weeks later so we can check that everything is settling in nicely.

Please note, osseointegration of your implants is not guaranteed and, while we have a 95% success rate, please understand that many factors, including your general health and any medications you may be taking, have a profound influence on the success of your implant.

Future care

It is essential for you to maintain the very best oral health to preserve gums and the bone surrounding your implants. We offer an oral health education appointment after three months so your hygienist and oral health educator can check you are maintaining a high level of dental health.

During your routine dental examinations, your dentist will also check your crowns or bridgework and x-rays will normally be taken annually.

If you have problems with *any* of your teeth or restorative dental work, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

Implant restorative dentistry is complex and heavily dependent on you playing a vital role in the restoration of your dental function. If things go wrong, we will help you understand what has happened and do our very best to solve any problems.