

2015

# Preprosthetic Surgery for the Jaw

# Preprosthetic Surgery

Preprosthetic surgery is done to modify the upper or lower jaw ridges so that dentures can be worn more comfortably or so that dental implants can be placed. Occasionally bone from your hip or skin from your thigh is used to increase the height of the jaw ridges.

Some preprosthetic surgery does not require an overnight stay in hospital. You will be told before your surgery date if you will need to stay in hospital after your operation.

This pamphlet explains what to expect if you are having preprosthetic surgery.

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your healthcare provider.  
We are here to help you.

## Day of surgery

- You will be asked to arrive at the hospital at least 1 1/2 hours before your operation. Go to the Same Day Surgery Unit on the 10th floor of the Victoria Building, Victoria General site.
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery. **Your surgery will be cancelled if you eat or drink after this time.** Nausea and vomiting are more likely to happen during or shortly after your operation if you eat or drink.
- Note to patients not staying overnight in hospital: You will need to have someone with you to take you home at the end of the operation. **Your surgery will be cancelled if you do not have a drive home.** Under no circumstance will you be allowed to drive yourself home - you are legally impaired for 24 hours.
- **Stop smoking at least 24 hours before your operation.** Smoking can make your recovery harder and can delay healing. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the hospital grounds. This includes electronic cigarettes.
- Do not bring valuables to the hospital. The hospital is not responsible for them.
- The nurse will ask you several health questions and take your vital signs.
- Tell the nurse if you have any food or drug allergies.
- You may need blood tests.

- The oral surgeon may speak with you if he or she hasn't yet.
- If the surgeon asks you to, please bring your dentures to the Operating Room in a denture cup that the nurse will give you.
- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. Please do not wear any undergarments.
- Please give the nurse the name and phone number of the person you want contacted after your operation.
- **Note to those waiting:** Patients who are having preprosthetic surgery are usually in the Operating Room and recovery area for 2-6 hours. The length of time depends on the type of surgery needed. At the end of the operation, the surgeon will contact a friend or family member when asked to do so by the patient.

## **After surgery**

- You will be taken to the recovery area. You will stay there for 1-4 hours depending on the length of your surgery.
- The nurses will take your vital signs several times during your stay there. This is normal.
- Medications will be given to make you comfortable, prevent nausea, and lessen facial swelling. These medications will be given to you by intravenous (IV) until you are drinking well.
- A nurse will help you to the bathroom until you are steady on your feet.
- You will have stitches near your waistline if bone was taken from your hip. These stitches are often covered by tape for several days. You may have a bandage over your thigh if skin was taken from there.
- Once you are fully awake and comfortable, you will be taken to your hospital room if you are not able to go home.

## If you stay in hospital

- Once you are in your room, you may have visitors. We will try to accommodate your needs and your family's needs for contact. We also must respect the rights and needs of other patients. **Please check with the nurses about visiting guidelines for your unit.** Visitors may be asked to leave when the doctors or nurses come to see you.
- You will be encouraged to drink fluids. The intravenous (IV) will be taken out only when all the IV medications have been given and you are drinking enough fluids.
- Once you feel steady on your feet, you will be encouraged to get up and walk. You may need help walking on the first day.
- The resident surgeons will see you every morning. Please tell them if you have any concerns or problems.
- Facial swelling can go up over 3 days and will gradually go down over 3-4 weeks. Ice packs will be placed on your face to lessen the swelling.
- A dietitian will talk with you about what you can and cannot eat during the healing period. If possible, have the person who will cook your meals at this meeting.
- Your upper or lower denture may be secured in your mouth. This allows for the undisturbed healing of the jaw ridges. The surgeon will tell you when the dentures will be taken out.

- If your dentures were not secured to your jaw ridges during surgery, the surgeon will tell you when you can start wearing your dentures. It is very important not to wear the dentures until this time.
- It is very important to rinse your mouth as instructed. The surgeon and residents will talk about mouth care with you. Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is necessary to prevent infection.
- If bone was taken from your hip or skin was taken from your thigh, you may find it uncomfortable to walk for several days. This will get better and is normal.
- If bone was taken from your hip or skin was taken from your thigh, AVOID taking a bath for a period of time. It is OK to take a shower.
- The surgeon can only estimate how many days you will be in hospital. You will be discharged only when you are eating and drinking well and are comfortable.

## Discharge checklist

- Have the surgeons told you that you are ready for discharge?
- Have you arranged for a drive home?
- Have you had X-rays taken after your surgery?
- Has the dietitian spoken with you about what you can and cannot eat?
- Do you have a follow-up appointment for the Oral Surgery Clinic?
- Do you have instructions from the oral surgeons about your care at home?
- Do you know when to have your stitches taken out?
- Do you have your prescriptions?



## **Questions or concerns once you are at home**

For urgent questions or concerns such as (but not limited to):

- › Bleeding from the wound
- › Discharge from the wound
- › Difficulty swallowing or breathing
- › Significant nausea and/or vomiting
- › Increasing pain or pain not improving
- › Significant increase in swelling
- › Fever

Call 902-473-5238 between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. Messages will be returned as soon as possible.

If it's busy or outside of the above hours, call 902-473-2222 and ask for the oral surgery resident on call. Stay on the line and the resident will be with you shortly.

## **Non urgent questions**

Call the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Clinic, Victoria General site between 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

The phone number is 902-473-2070. Messages will be returned as soon as possible.



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