Pre-admission Advice for Patients Undergoing Oral Surgery
Under General or Local Anaesthetic With or Without Sedation

Please read this leaflet carefully. It advises you about your post-operative pain relief medication.

Before your operation
We strongly advise any patient who smokes to give up as early as possible before their operation. Smoking increases the risk of breathing problems during an operation and post-operative complications such as deep vein thrombosis, chest infection and wound infection.

It can lead to ‘dry socket’ a condition where a blood clot fails to occur, the bone is exposed and the patient experiences intense throbbing and aching. See the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk for more information about this condition.

What to expect in hospital
Your operation will be carried out under a general anaesthetic (when you are asleep). You will be advised when to stop eating and drinking before your operation – please follow all instructions as your operation may not proceed if you fail to do so.

During the operation, the dental surgeon will inject some local anaesthetic into the area where the tooth or teeth are to be removed. This will eliminate pain, but may continue to make you feel numb around the mouth and lips for 4–6 hours after your operation.

After the operation
You may experience some facial bruising and swelling, particularly if you are having wisdom teeth extracted. This may last for up to a week and is usually worst in the first three days, leading to a sore and stiff jaw. You may wish to avoid crunchy and chewy foods during this period to reduce any discomfort.

Try to avoid hot drinks in the first 12 hours after your operation as there is a risk that if your mouth is still numb you could burn your mouth or lips. Hot drinks could also slow down the healing process in the mouth.

In the first 24 hours after the operation the healing process begins and a clot forms in the socket where the tooth has been removed. You should avoid rinsing your mouth as this could dislodge the clot and slow down the healing process.

On the first day after the operation, and for a further two weeks, you should start rinsing with a good quality mouthwash, such as Corsodyl, three times each day, after meals. You may brush your teeth as normal but avoid any open sockets.

Some patients will need to have sutures in their gum. These will be dissolvable and do not need to be removed, but will disintegrate in about 7–10 days.

Take some regular pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. Take each dose regularly, following the instructions on the packet. Do not exceed the maximum daily dose.

Risks of having oral surgery
Bleeding
If you experience bleeding from your mouth, apply pressure to stem the flow of blood using a clean, rolled-up piece of cotton.

Infection
If you experience a high temperature, extreme pain around the extraction site which is not relieved by regular pain relief medication or a nasty taste or discharge in the mouth, please contact your GP or dental practitioner for advice or treatment.
Dry socket
You’re more at risk of developing dry socket if:
• you don’t follow your dentist’s instructions after the extraction;
• you smoke;
• you’ve had the condition before;
• you’re over 25 years old; or
• the extraction was complicated.
See the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk for more information about dry socket.

Going home
This operation is usually undertaken as a day case and you will need to arrange for someone to collect you, drive you home and look after you overnight.

Although you will be fit to go home when you are discharged, the effects of the anaesthetic may linger for some hours. You should go home and rest under supervision until you feel fully recovered. It is important that a responsible adult remains with you overnight after your operation. You should not drive, cycle, drink alcohol, or operate machinery (including a cooker or kettle) for at least 48 hours from the time of the anaesthetic.

Do not confine yourself to bed – please read the leaflet ‘Preventing Blood Clots – What You Should Know’. It will help you understand why it is important to be up and about as soon as you can after your operation.