

There may be students and observers present during your consultation as part of their ongoing training. Please let the staff know if you do not wish any students to be present during your attendance.

Please ask a member of staff if you would like a chaperone present during your procedure.

Southport Hospital  
Town Lane,  
Kew,  
Southport,  
Merseyside,  
PR8 6PN  
Telephone:  
01704 547 471

Ormskirk Hospital  
Dicconson Way,  
Wigan Road,  
Ormskirk,  
Lancashire,  
L39 2AZ  
Telephone:  
01695 577 111

## Apicectomy Pre-Operative information

### Patient leaflet

**If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.**

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

## Apicectomy

This leaflet is for patients who may need to have an operation to have an apicectomy. It explains why this procedure is required, what is involved and any risks or complications that there may be. If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer or would like further explanation please ask.

### The problem

An infection has occurred at the tip of the root of one of your teeth. Sometimes this does not cause any symptoms but usually people are aware of discomfort and occasional episodes of swelling, gum boils or bad taste. You may well already have been given a course of antibiotics in an attempt to treat the infection.

### Why do I need treatment?

If left untreated the infection is likely to develop into an abscess or cyst. As well as causing pain this can lead to the loss of bone surrounding the root. As a result the tooth will become loose and in some cases may be lost.

### What does the treatment involve?

Your dentist will have already tried to get rid of the infection by removing the nerve of the tooth and placing a root filling. The infection now needs to be removed surgically in a procedure called an apicectomy. This involves cleaning out the infection from the bone, removing a small portion of the tip of the root of the tooth and then sealing the root with a small filling.

## Notes

## Notes

It is necessary to make a small cut in the gum over the root of the tooth and then lift the gum off the bone. The area of infection is uncovered by removing a small amount of bone with a drill. Any infected tissue is thoroughly cleaned away from the tip of the root before 2-3mm of the root tip is removed. The root is sealed with a small filling. The gum is then stitched back into place with dissolvable stitches that take around two weeks to disappear.

The whole procedure will take around 40 minutes from start to finish.

We allocate 45 minutes per patient for their appointment and we try to keep waiting times down to a minimum, however please take into consideration that circumstances occur out of our control which can cause delays. We would therefore advise to keep the morning or afternoon free for your appointment.

### What type of anaesthetic is used?

Usually an apicectomy is carried out under a local anaesthetic, an injection into the gum that numbs the area.

However the degree of difficulty of the surgery, any underlying medical conditions and other personal circumstances will be taken into account when choosing the method of anaesthetic. The surgeon will discuss with you which method is most appropriate.

From time to time patients may experience a feeling of palpitations or their heart 'racing'. This is due to the adrenaline in the injection, however this feeling passes in a few moments.

### **What preparation do you need to do?**

It is important to have a light meal up to 2 hours before your treatment. You can drink fluids and take any medicines as normal unless you have been instructed otherwise. Do not drink any alcohol. You can drive yourself home if you feel safe to do so. If you are particularly nervous it is advisable to bring someone with you to drive you home or escort you on public transport.

### **What will happen when you arrive into hospital?**

Once you have booked in at the reception desk, one of the nurses will introduce themselves and the team who will be treating you. There will be 2 nurses and 1 oral surgeon with you during the procedure. Before the procedure takes place the surgeon will take an up to date medical history and a consent form will need to be signed in addition to the one you signed at your consultation appointment. At the end of the procedure a post operative instruction pack will be given to you to take home which includes direct numbers and emergency numbers. Once the procedure has been completed you will be free to go home as long as you feel well to do so.

### **What can I expect after the operation?**

When the local anaesthetic wears off a few hours after surgery there will be some discomfort. Painkillers that do not contain aspirin for examples paracetamol or ibuprofen are helpful to reduce swelling and pain. If you are unable to take these due to medical reasons, advise the surgeon who will be able to provide an alternative. There is discomfort for the first few days although it may take a couple of weeks to completely disappear.

### **For appointments**

Telephone: 01695 656 680

Email: [soh-tr.appointments@merseywestlancs.nhs.uk](mailto:soh-tr.appointments@merseywestlancs.nhs.uk)

## Special instructions

If anything is required specific to your treatment it will be discussed with you on the day of your consultation.

## Other useful telephone numbers and contacts:

NHS 111

Stop Smoking Helpline  
(Sefton)

0300 100 1000

Stop Smoking Helpline  
(West Lancashire)

0800 328 6297

Some swelling can occur both inside and outside the mouth after surgery, this is usually most noticeable after about two days. It may be difficult to clean your teeth around the surgical site but it is important you brush gently and to keep the area free from food by gently rinsing with warm salt water (dissolve a flat teaspoon of kitchen salt in a cup of warm water) 24 hours after your surgery, 3 to 4 times per day especially after food for 10 to 14 days.

It is also important to avoid hard foods and biting directly on the tooth that has been treated for 6 weeks.

## Do I need to take any time off work?

Usually it will be necessary to take a few days off work and avoid strenuous exercise for this time.

## What are the possible problems?

It is unusual for the area to bleed after surgery but should this happen it can usually be stopped by applying pressure over the area for at least 10 minutes with a damp rolled up swab.

If the bleeding does not stop please contact the department. Lifting the gum to uncover the root of the tooth can occasionally lead to a numb feeling in the gum. This usually disappears after a few months.

Because the gum is cut it can occasionally shrink back a few months after surgery as scar tissue forms. This is not normally a problem but if the tooth has been crowned the edge of the crown may become exposed.

Even if all the infection is successfully removed it can sometimes return months or even years later. If this happens it might be necessary to have the operation repeated but sometimes the tooth is better removed. This can be discussed at a later date with your dentist if required.

### **Will I need another appointment?**

Sometimes a review appointment is required whereby we take a second x-ray 6 to 8 weeks after surgery; however this is not always necessary and is at the surgeon's discretion.

### **Who to contact if you have any further questions or Concerns**

If you are worried or have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact the department and speak to one of the nursing team:

Maxillofacial

Office:  
01695 65 6966

Reception:  
01695 65 6334

During your contact with us, it is important that you are happy with your care and treatment. Please speak to a member of staff on the ward or department sister if you have questions or concerns.

### **Matron**

A matron is also available during the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. During these periods, ward and department staff can contact the matron to arrange to meet with you. Out of hours, a senior nurse can be contacted via the ward and department to deal with any concerns you may have.

### **Infection control request**

Preventing infections is a crucial part of our patients' care. To ensure that our standards remain high our staff have regular infection prevention and control training and their practice is monitored in the workplace.

We ask patients and visitors to assist us in preventing infections by cleaning their hands at regular intervals and informing staff of areas within the hospital that appear soiled.

As a patient there may be times that you are unsure whether a staff member has cleaned their hands. If in doubt please ask the staff member and they will be only too happy to put your mind at ease by cleaning their hands so that you can see them.