



Extraction of teeth under general anaesthesia in children

Information for parents and carers

About this leaflet

This leaflet is designed to give you information about the procedure your child is going to have. Please refer to the leaflet “Your child’s general anaesthetic” for important information about

- how to prepare your child for coming to hospital
- what to bring with them
- what to expect when you are at the hospital and
- information to enable your child to receive a safe general anaesthetic.

Why does my child need to have a tooth/teeth removed?

There are several reasons why this may have been recommended, including:

- decay (bad teeth)
- infection
- gum disease.

It may be that your child will require the removal of more teeth than you first expect, as the teeth can be examined more thoroughly whilst your child is anaesthetised.

Are there any alternatives to dental extraction?

There are usually no alternative treatments. Other possible treatments will have been discussed with your own dentist or with the dentist at the pre-operative assessment clinic.

What are the risks?

The main risk is bleeding. This usually settles on its own. Rarely your child may need another procedure to stop this. Some swelling and bruising may also occur.

How long will the operation take?

This will depend on how many teeth are being removed. When the procedure has finished your child will be taken to first stage recovery until they are awake, then they will go to second stage recovery where you can be with your child until they go home.

What will happen when my child goes to second stage recovery?

A nurse will check your child at regular intervals until they are fully awake. Once your child is ready, they will be given a drink.

Will my child have any pain?

Your child may complain of some discomfort follow this procedure. It is important that you tell your child's nurse if your child has any discomfort so that they can give them some pain relieving medicine to make them feel better. The dentist will usually inject local anaesthetic around the teeth to be extracted while your child is asleep. This will numb the area and make it less sore when your child wakes up.

When can my child go home?

Once your child is comfortable, their temperature is normal and they do not feel sick they will be allowed to go home. Very rarely, the dentist or anaesthetist may advise that your child needs an overnight stay in hospital.

Will there be any stitches?

Rarely, there may be a need to place stitches inside your child's mouth. These will usually dissolve on their own. If the stitches are non-dissolving you will be given an appointment to return to the clinic to have them removed. Please do not let your child pull them out.

Bleeding

After a tooth is removed, a blood clot will form in the socket. Do not disturb the blood clot as there is nothing better you can put in its place. Do not rinse out or poke at it with the tongue or a handkerchief, especially not for the next three hours.

When your child leaves the hospital, the bleeding will have stopped. Your child should not take part in any activity for the rest of the day, and should not return to school. If the blood clot is disturbed, it may start bleeding again. If this happens, don't be alarmed, take a clean handkerchief, roll it up like a sausage, place it over the socket and ensure that your child bites down firmly on it for 20 minutes by the clock. Repeat if necessary. Do not lie your child down.

If the bleeding continues, contact the dentist who referred you, or in an emergency, contact the Dental Helpline on 01851 707500 between 9am - 5pm or outside these hours NHS24 on 111.

Is there anything special I have to do to look after my child at home?

Yes, we suggest you give your child soft food initially and encourage them to drink plenty of fluids. Avoid hot food and drinks for six hours, so they may brush their teeth before going to bed.

Rinsing the mouth

Do not rinse on the day of extraction, but start rinsing the following day with lukewarm salt water if your child is able to do this (one teaspoon of table salt to half a glass of warm water). Do this for several days afterwards, particularly after meals. This will help with the healing process.

Will my child have any pain at home?

When you go home it is advisable to give your child regular pain relieving medicine for the first 24 to 48 hours even if they do not complain of discomfort. After this you can give it as necessary. Paracetamol (Calpol) and/or Ibuprofen (Nurofen) can be given at the dosages recommended on the bottle/pack.

Are there any complications which I must look out for once we have been discharged home?

The main complication is bleeding. Please refer to the 'bleeding' section within this leaflet for instructions.

If your child has any difficulties breathing or swallowing, develops a high temperature, has face swelling that lasts more than three days or has severe pain which is not relieved by pain relieving medicine, then you must contact your dentist or the hospital.

When can my child go back to school?

This will depend on the number of teeth your child has had removed. Please ask your dentist for advice.

Emergency Contact Number

Dental Helpline - tel. 01851 707500 (between 9am - 5pm)

NHS24 - tel. 111 (between 6pm - 8am)

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- share your story at: www.careopinion.org.uk
- visit our website feedback section at: www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk
- tel. 01851 704704 (ext. 2236), please leave a message on the answering machine if no one is available to answer.



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