

Maxillofacial Biopsy

We have taken a sample from your mouth or head to analyze. This sheet gives you instructions on how to care for yourself after this procedure. It supplements the information the staff discussed with you.



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

After a biopsy in the head or mouth area, it is normal to have:

- Some **pain** as the freezing (local anesthetic) wears off. Pain will often get worse for the first 3 days, and then gradually get better.
- **Swelling** that gets worse for the first 3 days, and then gradually gets better.
- **Blood oozing** from the wound for up to 4 hours after surgery. Small amounts of blood in the mouth or saliva is also normal for up to 24 hours after surgery.
- **Stitches** in your mouth.
- **Scar tissue** in the area that may feel hard or firm, but will soften over time.
- **Bruising** on your face, especially if you are on blood thinners.
- **Nausea and vomiting**, if you are taking narcotic pain medicine, or are dehydrated.



Contact your surgeon or go to your nearest Urgent Care Centre or Emergency Department, if you have:

- Pain that does not get better, or gets worse, even after taking medicine
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing
- Excessive bleeding that does not stop
- Pus or bad smelling fluid coming from the wound
- New swelling that appears 5 days after surgery
- Severe nausea (feeling sick to your stomach) or vomiting (throwing up)
- Signs of dehydration (cannot pee, fainting, heart racing when standing up)

For emergency issues, you may also call Humber River Hospital at (416) 242-1000 and ask to speak to your oral surgeon.



MEDICINES

REGULAR MEDICINE: You may have been asked to stop taking certain medicines before the procedure.

- Blood thinners (such as Aspirin®, Warfarin, Plavix®): Ask your surgeon when you can restart these. **Taking this medicine too soon after surgery may increase your risk of bleeding.**
- All other medicine: You may restart them after surgery **unless your surgeon tells you otherwise.**

MEDICINES continued on next page →



MEDICINES

PAIN MEDICINE:

- **Over-the-counter (OTC) pain medicine:** For mild to moderate pain, you may take either:
 - » 600 mg to 800 mg of Advil® every 8 hours as needed (maximum 2400 mg in 24 hours) **OR**
 - » 500 mg to 1000 mg of Tylenol Extra Strength® every 8 hours as needed (maximum 4000 mg in 24 hours).
- **Narcotic pain medicine:** If your surgeon prescribed a narcotic pain medicine (such as Tylenol® 3, Percocet®, or Demerol®), take it for severe pain, as directed. If you still feel pain, please contact the office and we can change the formula. Taking narcotics may cause:
 - » Nausea and vomiting - Do not take the medicine on an empty stomach.
 - » Drowsiness - Do not drive, use heavy machinery, or do tasks that need concentration.
 - » Constipation - Treat with OTC Colace®, Docusate Sodium®, or a stool softener.



- Do not drink alcohol while on narcotic pain medicine.
- If you are on Tylenol® 3 or Percocet®, do not take OTC Tylenol®.

MEDICATED RINSE: If your surgeon prescribed a medicated rinse, take as directed.



APPOINTMENTS

Surgeon Name:

- A follow-up appointment is not always needed. If you do need an appointment, your surgeon will arrange one for you.



RESULTS

- If needed, you will meet with your surgeon within 2 to 4 weeks to discuss your biopsy results. We will also send the results to your primary care provider.



TALK WITH ME (ABOUT MY CARE)

ACTIVITY:

- On the day of your surgery, try to rest.
- Do not exercise or do strenuous activity for the first 24 hours as this might disturb the wound and increase bleeding.
- Do not smoke for the first 2 weeks as it can slow healing and lead to complications.

TALK WITH ME continued on next page →



TALK WITH ME (ABOUT MY CARE)

DIET:

- On the day of surgery, begin with soft foods (such as Jell-O®, fish, well-cooked pasta, eggs). Resume a normal diet when comfortable.
- For the first 24 hours, do not consume hot food/liquid as it may prevent the wound from healing.
- For the first week, do not consume anything small (such as seeds, nuts, and popcorn). These can get stuck in the wound and cause an infection.

MOUTH AND WOUND CARE:

- Always keep your fingers and tongue away from the wound. Do not pull on the cheek to inspect the wound.
- For the first 24 hours, do not spit, suck on a straw, or rinse. This will disrupt wound healing and increase bleeding and pain.
- After 24 hours:
 - » You may start to rinse your mouth with a salt water (mix 1/2 teaspoon salt in 250 ml (1 cup) warm water) or the medicated rinse. Rinse 3 to 4 times a day. **Do not rinse vigorously (with a lot of force).**
 - » You may start to brush your teeth and gums, but be gentle and avoid the surgical site.
- After 5 to 10 days, the stitches in your mouth will start to dissolve, but it is okay if they fall out sooner.

PAIN AND SWELLING:

Pain and swelling will often get worse for the first 3 days after surgery, then gradually get better.

- For pain, take pain medicine as instructed (see **MEDICINES** on page 2).
- For swelling:
 - » For the first 24 hours, apply an ice pack. Put ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between your skin and the bag. Leave the ice on for 15 minutes and off for 15 minutes.
 - » Keep your head elevated (head above the heart), even when sleeping (use 2 pillows to raise your head).
 - » After 3 days, if you desire, you can apply heat to your face to reduce swelling faster. This can be a heating pad or a warm, moist towel.

TALK WITH ME continued on next page →



TALK WITH ME (ABOUT MY CARE)

BLEEDING:

Small amounts of blood in the mouth or saliva is normal for up to 24 hours after surgery. If excessive bleeding occurs (mouth continues to fill with bright red blood):

- Wash your hands with soap and water. Look in the mouth to identify the bleeding site.
- Place a thick moist gauze pack or tea bag on the site. Bite down gently but firmly for 30 minutes. Do not chew on the gauze. If you cannot bite down on the biopsy site due to its location, apply direct pressure for 30 minutes with the gauze or tea bag.
- If excessive bleeding persists, contact your surgeon.

NAUSEA (FEELING SICK TO YOUR STOMACH) AND VOMITING (THROWING UP):

- For nausea and vomiting, drink only clear liquids (such as Sprite®, ginger ale, Gatorade® or other sports drinks) and eat soft bread. You may also use Gravol® (dimenhydrinate).

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Surgical Clinics, Humber River Hospital • Level 4, 1235 Wilson Ave., Toronto, Ont. M3M 0B2 • **Tel:** (416) 242-1000 ext. 23404

Park in the East Parkade and enter through East entrance or Portal of Care A. Take the East Outpatient Elevators to level 4.

English: This information is important! If you have trouble reading this, ask someone to help you.

Italian: Queste informazioni sono importanti! Se ha difficoltà a leggere questo, chiedi aiuto a qualcuno.

Spanish: ¡Esta información es importante! Si tiene dificultad en leer esto, pida que alguien le ayude.