

Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS) - Surgical Removal of Tooth

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

When you are waiting for further treatment it can sometimes feel like a long wait. The information and advice here is aimed at helping you manage that wait so you arrive for your appointment in the best possible physical and mental health.

The NHS has limited resources which means that we are unable to treat you as quickly as we would like. Each healthcare provider has to consider the type of help you need, how quickly you need treatment, the best course of action to help you and when and where you can be seen.

The process of sorting patients based on their individual needs is called prioritisation. The system of prioritisation is applied consistently across the NHS to help us to decide the order in which patients receive their treatment. This is essential to ensure that we provide care based on need. The system means that care is delivered in the fairest way possible.

Once a referral has been made from primary care to secondary care, the specialist team conduct assessments and then agree with you on the right course of action. At this stage, the urgency will be assessed. If you have a long-term health condition, for example, you may need treatment faster than someone without.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst you are waiting for your surgical extraction depending on your oral needs, the following steps may vary. If your regular dentist cannot see you or you don't have a dentist, an emergency dentist (via 111) will do everything they can to help you the same or next day. Many mild toothaches are caused by food caught between teeth. Before calling an emergency dentist, gently floss to remove any trapped food particles that could be causing pain and rinse with warm water. If the toothache persists, call 111 as soon as possible and take over-the-counter pain relievers until your appointment. DO NOT put crushed aspirin on your tooth as this burns gums and destroys tooth enamel. There are some numbing agents you can use to help alleviate pain until you see a dentist. Numbing agents with benzocaine should not be used for children or infant toothaches though. If you experience tooth pain throughout the night, try to keep your head elevated. Keeping your head up can help ease the pain while you fall asleep and can make it less painful while you are awake.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Dental emergency can cover a broad range of complaints, including: Severe dental pain – if you are in severe dental pain an emergency dental appointment could provide the necessary care to relieve your dental pain. Uncontrolled Bleeding from the mouth – uncontrolled bleeding from the mouth is considered a dental emergency and you should see your dentist as soon as possible. Infection – an abscess in the mouth is considered a dental emergency as a serious infection could be life-threatening. If you are experiencing swelling in or around your mouth or you have difficulty swallowing, you should speak to your dentist immediately. You should contact a dentist if you are unsure about any of the above symptoms you are experiencing.

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

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