



Patient & Family Guide

2022

Preprosthetic Jaw Surgery

VG Site



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Preprosthetic Jaw Surgery

Preprosthetic jaw surgery is done to change the upper or lower jaw ridges. This is done so dentures can be worn more comfortably or dental implants can be placed. Sometimes bone from your hip or skin from your thigh is used to make the jaw ridges higher.

You may not need to stay overnight in the hospital. You will be told before your surgery date if you will need to stay in the hospital after your surgery.

This pamphlet explains what to expect if you are having preprosthetic jaw surgery.

Day of surgery

- Come to the hospital at least 1½ hours before your appointment time. Go to the Same Day Surgery Unit on the 10th floor of the Victoria Building, Victoria General site of the QEII.
- **Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery. Your surgery will be cancelled if you eat or drink after this time.** If you eat or drink, you are more likely to have nausea (upset stomach) and vomiting (throwing up) during or shortly after surgery.

If you are not staying overnight in the hospital:

You will need someone to drive you home after surgery. **Your surgery will be cancelled if you do not have a ride home. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home.**

- **Stop smoking at least 24 hours (1 day) before surgery.** Smoking can make your recovery harder and can slow down healing. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the hospital grounds. This includes electronic cigarettes.
- **Do not** bring valuables (like cash or jewelry) to the hospital. The hospital is not responsible for the loss of any item.
- The nurse will ask you questions about your health and check your vital signs (temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and breathing).
- Tell the nurse if you have any medication or food allergies.
- You may need blood tests.
- The oral surgeon will talk with you, if they have not already done so.
- If the surgeon asks you to, please bring your dentures to the operating room (OR). The nurse will give you a denture cup.

- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. Please **do not** wear any undergarments (underwear, bra).
- Please give the nurse the name and phone number of the person you want contacted after your surgery.
- You will have an intravenous (IV) inserted (put in) into a vein in your arm for medications and fluids.

Note: You will be in the OR and recovery area for 2 to 6 hours. The length of time depends on the type of surgery you are having. When your surgery is done, the surgeon will contact the person you have asked them to.

After your surgery

- You will be taken to the recovery area. You will stay there for 1 to 4 hours, depending on the length of your surgery.
- The nurses will check your vital signs several times during your stay. This is normal.
- You will get medications to make you comfortable, lower swelling, and prevent nausea. These medications will be given through your IV until you are drinking well.

- A nurse will help you to the bathroom until you are steady on your feet.
- If bone was taken from your hip, you will have stitches near your waistline. These stitches are often covered by tape for several days.
- If skin was taken from your thigh, you may have a bandage on your thigh.
- If you are staying overnight, you will be taken to your hospital room when you are fully awake and comfortable.

In your hospital room:

- Once you are in your room, you can have visitors. You may visit with your loved ones, but we must also respect the needs of other patients. **Please ask the nurse about visiting guidelines for your unit.** Visitors may be asked to leave when the doctors or nurses come to see you or another patient.
- You will be encouraged to drink fluids. Your IV will be taken out only when all of the IV medications have been given and you are drinking enough fluids.
- Once you feel steady on your feet, you will be encouraged to get up and walk. You may need help walking on the first day.

- The resident surgeons will visit you every morning. Please tell them if you have any concerns or problems.
- Facial swelling can go up over 3 days. Then it will slowly go down over 3 to 4 weeks. Ice packs will be placed on your face to help control swelling.
- A dietitian will talk with you about what you can and cannot eat while you heal. If possible, have the person who cooks your meals at this meeting.
- Your upper and/or lower dentures may be secured to your jaw ridges. This lets the jaw ridges heal without being disturbed. The surgeon will tell you when your dentures will be taken out.
- If your dentures were not secured to your jaw ridges during surgery, the surgeon will tell you when you can start wearing them. **Do not wear your dentures until your surgeon says it is OK.**
- **It is very important to rinse your mouth as you are told.** The surgeon and residents will talk about mouth care with you. You must keep your mouth clean to prevent infection.
- If bone was taken from your hip, or skin was taken from your thigh, you may find it uncomfortable to walk for several days. This is normal. It will get better over time.

- If bone was taken from your hip, or skin was taken from your thigh, **do not** have a bath until the wound has healed. It is OK to shower.
- The surgeon can only estimate how many days you will be in the hospital. You will be discharged only when you are eating and drinking well and are comfortable.

Discharge checklist

- Have the surgeons told you that you are ready for discharge?
- Do you have someone to drive you home?
- Have you had X-rays taken after surgery?
- Has the dietitian talked with you about what you can eat and drink?
- Do you have a follow-up appointment at the Oral Surgery Clinic?
- Have you been given instructions from the oral surgeons about your care at home?
- Do you know when to have your stitches taken out?
- Have you been given prescriptions for pain and discomfort?
- Have the surgeons suggested when you can return to work or school and your usual activities?

If you have urgent questions or concerns or any of the following symptoms:

- › Bleeding from your wound
- › Discharge from your wound
- › Trouble swallowing or breathing
- › A lot of nausea and/or vomiting
- › Pain that is getting worse or not getting better
- › A lot more swelling
- › Fever (temperature above 38° C or 100.4° F)

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday to Friday:

- › Phone: 902-473-5238

We will return your message as soon as possible.

Outside above hours or if line is busy:

- › Phone: 902-473-2222

Ask for the oral surgery resident on call. Stay on the line and the resident will be with you shortly.

Non-urgent questions

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Clinic
(8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday to Friday):

› Phone: 902-473-2070

We will return your message as soon as possible.

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your health care provider. We are here to help you.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

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Prepared by: Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, QEII

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.