

Alveolar Cleft Graft

Discharge Advice for Parents and Carers

Going Home

Now that your child is going home after their Alveolar Cleft Graft, you may find this information leaflet helpful. If you have any urgent concerns about your child when you go home please contact the switchboard at CHI Crumlin on 01 4096100 and ask to speak with the Maxillofacial Registrar on duty.

For routine questions about your child's operation please contact your named Cleft Nurse Specialist or Maxillofacial Team member Monday-Friday 8am - 4pm on the number above.

Food

Your child should eat soft food that does not need to be chewed for 2-3 weeks, for example soups, smoothies, stewed fruit/vegetables, yoghurts. You will be advised at follow-up clinics in St James Hospital on how and when your child can eat their normal foods. Water is the best drink for your child



Painkillers and Antibiotics

You will be given a prescription for antibiotics and pain medication to take at home, it is important that the full course of both is taken.

Mouth Hygiene

Your child has a wound along the top of their gum with dissolvable stitches. The stitches will dissolve within a few weeks. During this time it is very important for your child to keep their mouth clean to stop the buildup of food debris as this will stop their wound healing.

Rinse their mouth out hourly with warm salty water from the day after surgery until your child's team tell you when this can be reduced. **Your child's wound may not heal if you do not follow the strict rinsing advice of the Maxillofacial Team.**

Mix a teaspoon of table salt with 200mls of water that has boiled and cooled. Vigorously rinse by using 100mls of this salty water in multiple mouthfuls every hour. Swish around the mouth with the head tipped forward. Brush lower teeth as normal but avoid brushing upper teeth until advised to do so.

Antibiotics are not a substitute for good oral hygiene.

Hip Wound

There are dissolvable stitches in your child's hip wound covered with a bandage. The bandage will be changed at their first follow-up clinic. This wound should be kept clean and dry for 2-3 weeks. Please wrap with clingfilm if your child needs a quick shower.

When the bandage is removed 3-4 weeks after surgery Bio-oil can be massaged onto their hip wound morning and night to help soften the scar. Over a short period of time your child's body will replace the missing bone from their hip: there will be no long term hip weakness.

Sleep

Your child's face will be swollen after their operation and they will be sent home with a lip dressing to help control the swelling. The dressing can be removed 4-5 days after surgery at home. Sleeping with an extra pillow at night might help swelling and discomfort each morning.

Play and Activities

Your child can return to school 3-4 weeks after their operation. Your child should avoid playing contact sports for 6-8 weeks after their surgery. This will allow your child's mouth and hip graft area time to heal. Advice on the above timelines may change depending on your child's progress. Please follow the advice given by your child's surgeon and Maxillofacial Team.



Follow Up Appointments

Your child's operation is one of a number of operations to help your child's appearance and teeth. It is important that your child continues to be reviewed by the Maxillofacial, Orthodontic and Cleft Teams. This will allow the teams to pick up any problems that may develop and to plan further operations. It is very important for your child to attend all their appointments.

If you are unable to attend your child's appointment please contact the relevant team to reschedule as soon as possible

St James Orthodontic Unit Mr. McSwiney Secretary: 01 410 3573
Email: mcswineysec@stjames.ie

Mr. George Takla Secretary: 01 4162556
Email: soceallaigh@stjames.ie

Maxillofacial Surgery Team Professor Gerry Kearns Secretary: 01 416 2352
Email: kearnssec@stjames.ie

Mr. Kumara Ekanayake Secretary: 01 410 3234
Email: ekanayakesec@stjames.ie

Important to Remember

Please contact Mr. Kearns's secretary using the above contact details to book your child's post-surgery review appointment for the next Maxillofacial Thursday clinic at St James' Hospital

Authors: Anne McGillivray, Jane Gunn, Caroline Reddy, Kate Farrell

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The information in this leaflet is correct at time of print