



We help children and families
be their healthiest

Jaw and osteotomy surgery

This fact sheet will help your family to prepare for your teen's surgery. Most patients stay in hospital for a day or 2 after surgery, and then go home. We've also included everything you'll need to know to care for your teen at home after discharge.

What to expect after the surgery

Your teen will wake up after surgery in the PACU (post-anesthetic care unit). We'll transfer him to his room once he is awake and stable.

Keeping the jaw in place

Our surgeons often use small, internal screws and plates to hold the jaw bones in place. But we may sometimes use wires and elastics attached to the teeth. If the teeth do not have elastics, your teen can open and close her mouth. If elastics and wires are in place, your teen will not be able to move the jaw, and this will make it hard to talk, eat and drink.

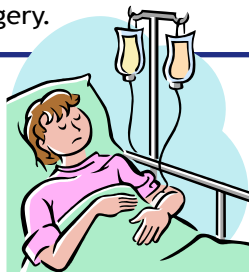
Your teen should not spit after surgery. We will teach your teen to use a mouth suction to remove saliva from the mouth. If your teen needs to throw up after surgery, we'll turn his head to the side and use the suction to remove any fluid in the mouth.



IV and NG tube

Your teen will have an IV (intravenous) for fluids until he is able to take fluids by mouth.

Your teen may have a tube from the nose to the stomach (NG or naso-gastric tube). This helps to remove blood that may collect in the stomach during surgery and can prevent nausea. We can usually remove the NG tube 4-6 hours after surgery.



Medications

We'll give medications for pain and nausea as needed.

Activity

Your teen will need to sleep sitting up at about a 30 degree angle. This helps to keep the swelling down. We'll use pillows to make your teen as comfortable as possible.

We'll get your teen out of bed and walking around the day of surgery.

Oxygen

We may give oxygen in a mist to prevent the lips and mouth from getting too dry. We'll also make sure your teen is getting enough oxygen by using a 'pulse oximeter' during the hospital stay. This is a clip or bandaid on the finger that checks the amount of oxygen in the blood.

Facial swelling

Patients often have some swelling of the face, and may have some bruising too. Your teen may have a pressure dressing or facial wrap for the first 24 hours after surgery. We will apply ice to the jaw to help reduce swelling.



Stop! No nose blowing for 14 days after surgery!
Blowing the nose can be dangerous. Instead, wipe mucous from the nostrils with a tissue.



Eating and drinking

Your teen can begin to have fluids once the NG tube comes out. We'll start off giving clear fluids like water and apple juice, and work up to full fluids like milkshakes and Ensure®. Baby food from a jar also works well. Make sure your teen doesn't take any fluids that are too hot or too cold.

Mouth Care

Keeping the mouth clean will help to prevent infections.

Rinse the mouth.

- Use a warm salt water solution every 2 hours (as long as your teen has stitches in the mouth)
- If your surgeon has also given you a special solution to use (like Oraclense® or Chlorhexidine), rinse with this twice a day for 2 weeks



Do not use a Water Pik® for mouth care. This can damage the incisions and introduce germs (bacteria) into the wounds.

Brush teeth gently.

We'll show your teen how to gently brush the outside of the teeth or wires. It's important to clean only the teeth, and leave the gum line alone. Your teen should brush her teeth 4 times each day.



Going home

Remember that swelling will peak by the 4th day after surgery. After that, it will begin to get better.

Make sure that:

- We send you home with disposable scissors (if your teen has elastics on the teeth)
- You buy wire cutters if your teen has wires (available at CHEO's KidCare Pharmacy by the main entrance)
- Your surgeon has explained when to cut the elastics or wires in your teen's mouth (if applicable)
- Your teen finishes all antibiotics prescribed

Diet: Blended foods, milkshakes or high protein supplements either by drinking, or through a syringe. Make sure your teen is getting 2-3 litres of fluid each day.

Mouth care: Keep up with the salt water rinses every 2 hours (and other rinses if your surgeon has prescribed these) as well as gentle brushing 4 times each day.

Activity: Check with your surgeon before your teen goes back to usual activities. Your teen may need to wait for 6-8 weeks before going back to some physical activities or sports.

Pain relief: You can give your teen ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) or acetaminophen for pain control. Your surgeon may also give you a prescription for pain medication for your teen.

Call your surgeon if you have questions, or if your teen:

- Has bright red bleeding
- Fever
- Foul or bad taste in the mouth



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