

Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Oral (mouth) biopsy

This leaflet has been designed to improve your understanding of any forthcoming treatment and contains answers to many of the commonly asked questions. If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer or would like further explanation please ask your surgeon.

What is a biopsy?

A biopsy is a procedure where a small piece of tissue is removed from an area so that it can be looked at closely under a microscope.

Excision biopsy: The biopsy may aim to remove an area completely. This is usually only appropriate for small lumps or swellings.

Incisional biopsy: Occasionally only a small piece of an abnormal area is removed to confirm a diagnosis.

How is it done?

- In most cases biopsies are carried out under local anaesthesia (an injection into the area to numb it). The injection takes a couple of minutes to work and means that the biopsy will be painless.
- The biopsy usually leaves a small hole that often requires stitching.
- In the majority of cases the stitches used are dissolvable and take around two weeks to disappear.
- The whole process (local anaesthetic injection, biopsy and stitching) usually takes around 15 minutes.

Is there much soreness or swelling afterwards?

When the local anaesthetic wears off after a few hours there is relatively little in the way of pain or swelling. Occasionally it is necessary to take simple painkillers (eg Paracetamol, Nurofen). Usually any discomfort only lasts a few days.

Will there be much bleeding?

Although there may be a little bleeding at the time of the biopsy, it usually stops very quickly and is unlikely to be a problem if the wound is stitched. Should the biopsy site bleed again when you get home this can usually be stopped by applying pressure over

the area for at least 10 minutes with a rolled up handkerchief or swab. If the bleeding does not stop please contact the hospital on 01223 245151 and ask for the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon on call.

When can I return to work?

This largely depends on your job and how you feel after the procedure. Most people are able to return to work later the same day.

Are there any things I should do when I get home?

- Be careful not to bite numb areas of your mouth.
- On the day of surgery you should avoid rinsing your mouth out vigorously as this may cause bleeding.
- You should clean your teeth normally, including those teeth next to the site of the biopsy.
- If you find that food catches around the stitches then the area can be gently rinsed with a mouthwash or warm salt water (dissolve a teaspoon of kitchen salt in a cup of warm water) commencing on the day after surgery.

Will I need another appointment?

Since the stitches are dissolvable a review appointment is not always necessary but you will usually be given one so that the results of the biopsy can be discussed with you. If no follow up appointment is arranged we will write to you with the results.

Adapted from:

British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

<http://www.baoms.org.uk/>



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. You cannot smoke on site. For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Informacje te można otrzymać w innych językach, w wersji dużym drukiem lub audio. Zamówienia prosimy składać pod numerem: 01223 216032 lub wysyłając e-mail: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Polish

Se precisar desta informação num outro idioma, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio por favor telefone para o 01223 216032 ou envie uma mensagem para: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Portuguese

Если вам требуется эта информация на другом языке, крупным шрифтом или в аудиоформате, пожалуйста, обращайтесь по телефону 01223 216032 или на вебсайт patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Russian

若你需要此信息的其他語言版本、大字體版或音頻格式，請致電 01223 216032 或發郵件到: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Cantonese

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Turkish

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Bengali

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