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# Apicectomy

## Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

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## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email [asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net](mailto:asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net). If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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# Apicectomy

## WHAT IS AN APICECTOMY?

An “apicectomy” is the removal of the tip of the root of the tooth known as the apex.

This minor surgical operation, usually carried out under a local anaesthetic, is performed either if infection or cysts persist after root treatment or if your dentist is unable to seal the root tip with a normal root filling.

An apicectomy cannot replace a normal root filling, which must be carried out first.

## WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE THERE?

Re-do the root filling. However, this may be impossible.

Remove the tooth, as this will remove the cause of the infection. Accept the infection, but this can be a hazard for some patients and unpleasant because the infection may gradually increase.

## WHAT IS INVOLVED?

The surgeon will numb the tooth and the surrounding area.

A small incision is made and a small flap of gum is lifted.

The tip of the root and a small amount of surrounding bone and tissue are removed.

The area is cleaned and disinfected.

A small filling is usually used to seal the root.

The gum is stitched back into place using dissolvable stitches.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AFTERWARDS?**

Some discomfort and swelling is to be expected. Advice will be given about taking painkillers, and you may need antibiotics. Please complete the course and follow the instructions carefully. You may have some mild swelling of the face especially in the lip or cheek.

As the local anaesthetic wears off some bleeding may occur. Apply gentle pressure for 10 minutes by pressing on the area of gum with some gauze or a clean handkerchief. Repeat this procedure if necessary. If you are still concerned about the bleeding, please contact the hospital.

Avoid smoking as this can delay healing.

You may need to take time off work afterwards.

## **RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS**

All surgery has risks and complications but there are a few associated with this procedure in particular.

Occasionally problems with the root are identified which cannot be repaired such as a fracture to the root.

You may have to have the operation repeated or the tooth may sometimes require extraction.

With some lower teeth there is a small possibility of injury to the nerve. This may cause numbness or tingling of the lower lip and tongue. It may take several weeks to recover and in rare instances the numbness may be permanent.

\* The procedure generally has a good success rate, but is not always successful.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

**Following your procedure**, if you have any cause for concern, or need further advice (as in preceding paragraph "What to Expect Afterwards") please ring St. Peter's Hospital – telephone **01932 872000** ext. **2493** or Ashford Hospital - telephone **01784 884009**

Additional information relating to Apicectomy may be obtained by logging on to <http://www.baoms.org.uk/sitemap.asp?id=20>