

Periradicular Surgery (Apicectomy)

Information for patients

Why do I need treatment?

An infection has occurred at the tip of the root or roots of a tooth, spreading into the surrounding bone that supports your tooth. Occasionally people may be unaware of the problem but usually you will feel discomfort, episodes of swelling, gumboils or have a bad taste in your mouth.

If left untreated the infection will spread- possibly developing into an abscess or cyst, and damaging the bone around your adjacent teeth. The tooth may become loose. The infection cannot be cured with antibiotics but they are often used to give temporary relief of symptoms.

What is the treatment?

Periradicular Surgery is a surgical procedure designed to cure an infection at the tip of the root or roots of a tooth.

A small cut is made in your gum, which is then lifted off the bone. Access through the bone to the root tip is made using a drill. The infection is cleaned out, part of the root tip is removed and a small filling is placed in the end of the root. Your gum is replaced with stitches.

What can I expect after the operation?

As the local anaesthetic wears off a few hours after surgery you may have some discomfort but this is quite variable. This is usually managed with a single dose of a pain killer such as Ibuprofen or Paracetamol but please consult your GP or Pharmacist if you are taking any other medication. Pain killers are seldom needed after the first day. You will have some swelling at the operation site and you may have some overlying skin (which is normal). This is worse 24-48 hours after the operation and should resolve over the next few days.

It is important to keep the site of your surgery as clean as possible. The area can be brushed gently with a toothbrush softened in hot water, together with hot salty mouthwash (add a teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water), 2-3 times a day, beginning the day **after** surgery and continuing for 1 week.

What are the possible problems?

Prolonged bleeding is rare but if it occurs, you should apply pressure to the bleeding area with a cotton handkerchief or a gauze swab for at least 10 minutes. This usually stops it.

Some tooth roots lie very close to important nerves which if damaged may cause numbness or tingling of your lower lip and chin on one side. If this risk is present your surgeon will discuss it with you.

Occasionally the gum will shrink back slightly following surgery, which may expose the margin of a crown if one is present.

The operation is occasionally unsuccessful at removing the infection. If unsuccessful after 2 attempts, it is probably better if the tooth is removed.

If you have any further questions please ask to discuss them with the surgeon before your treatment.

How did we do? Your feedback helps shape services that we provide.

visit: careopinion.org.uk

phone: 0800 122 31 35

scan the QR code below

