

Further questions?

Please contact the department during normal office hours if you have any other questions.

Telephone No.

Cheltenham General Hospital

08454 223196

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

08454 228175

**Patient Information for the
Gloucestershire Health Community**

Advice for patients having a mouth or facial biopsy

The purpose of this leaflet is to explain the procedure and answer some commonly asked questions. If you have any further questions please contact the Oral & Maxillo-facial department.

What is a biopsy?

A biopsy is the name for removing a small piece of skin on your face or a small piece of the lining of your mouth.

The abnormal tissue we are sampling is called the lesion.

It will have been said to you during your visit whether we intend to remove the whole lesion or just a representative piece of it.

Why do I need a biopsy?

Your dentist or doctor has sent you to see us for a second opinion, to try and establish what this lesion represents and what treatment, if any, is required.

Many lesions in the mouth and face look similar and it is important to know the exact nature of the lesion.

The piece we remove is sent to our pathologists for examination under the microscope so that we can make a correct diagnosis. We can then tailor any treatment to your exact needs.

How long will it take?

Approximately 20 minutes but it may take slightly longer.

How will the procedure be carried out?

Usually the procedure is carried out under local anaesthetic (i.e. a small injection in the mouth or face to numb the area) in our outpatient clinic.

It may be necessary to carry this out with you sedated or under a general anaesthetic in the main hospital. If this is the case this will have been discussed with you at your initial consultation.

What should I expect afterwards?

Discomfort

This is to be expected BUT is easily dealt with by simple painkillers. Ibuprofen and/or Paracetamol taken regularly are generally all that is required. **Always read the label for directions especially if you take other medicines or if you have been given prescription painkillers.**

Swelling & Bruising

Again this is to be expected at the operation site but is usually mild. The

swelling will probably be at its most obvious 1-2 days after the operation.

Stitches

These are usually dissolvable, but if not you will be given an appointment for their removal.

Will I be given instructions afterwards?

Full details for aftercare will be given following the procedure.

When can I return to work?

You can usually return to work the same day if the procedure has been carried out under local anaesthetic. You will probably require a day or two off work if you have had sedation or a general anaesthetic.

Review appointment

An appointment will be given for follow-up in 2-3 weeks. It is important that this is kept to check that healing is progressing satisfactorily and to discuss the results of the biopsy. If any further treatment is required this will be discussed with you, at this time and any further treatment planned.