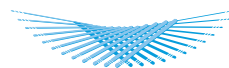




Alveolar Bone Graft

Information for our pre-teens



COUNTIES
MANUKAU
HEALTH

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What is an Alveolar Bone Graft?

If you had a cleft which involved your gum you may need some bone placed in the gap, allowing your adult front teeth to come down and be held firmly in the right place. Only a few children will have sufficient bone present in the cleft area to allow their adult teeth to erupt through, only needing braces to help straighten their teeth.

You'll be seen by the Cleft team between 7 to 9 years old. At this appointment they'll take photos and x-rays for their records and review your teeth, to check whether they are healthy and how many new teeth there are.

If you need an Alveolar Bone Graft

An appointment is made with the Orthodontic Department. They are a dental specialty which manages the growth and development of jaws, the straightening of teeth and the correction of the way teeth fit together.

You may need a quad helix or metal expander attached to your top teeth. This appliance makes the roof of your mouth wider so that the bone graft can fit into the gap at the cleft site. The Orthodontic Department will monitor this during regular appointments. Once the Orthodontist says you are ready the bone graft surgery can take place.

Admission

Your family will be notified by a Theatre Coordinator of the time and date of admission for surgery. A preadmission clinic appointment may be arranged prior to surgery for a house surgeon to check your general health and provide information about your admission. Your surgeon will not be present at this appointment but the nurse will be able to answer any questions you may have.

Admission to Kids First Surgical Unit is usually on the morning of surgery. If you live out of Auckland arrangements can be made for admission the day before surgery. It is important for children's safety that they do not have anything to eat or drink (nil by mouth) including water before surgery.

The time of surgery on the day will depend on the age of the children on the surgical list for that day. Usually the youngest child on the surgery list will go first.

Alveolar Bone Graft Surgery

In this operation the surgeon takes a small piece of bone, like small shavings, from your hip and places them into the gap in your gum. These small pieces of bone act like a bridge for new bone to grow and develop across the cleft site, providing support for the surrounding teeth. When this is all healed you should have a small scar on your hip and on your gum. After surgery you will stay in hospital for 1-2 days and will be discharged from hospital when comfortable.

After surgery you may experience some swelling around your mouth and there may be some discomfort around your hip. Regular pain relief medication will be given to relieve any discomfort.

Things to remember

- Eat soft food like yoghurt, mashed potatoes, pureed fruit, mince, ice cream, cooked pasta. Or chop food into small pieces and chew well.
- Avoid biting into foods such as fruit, meat, nuts, toast, and biscuits.
- Use a small, soft toothbrush, to thoroughly and carefully clean your mouth and teeth after meals. Rinse your mouth with a mouth wash after meals. It is important to keep your mouth clean to prevent infection. Avoid brushing your operation site.
- Avoid contact sports for 6 weeks
- Take a week off school to recover
- There will be a small dressing on your hip which can stay for 5 days. Remove and replace with a clean dressing, like a Band-Aid.

Follow Up Appointments

8 to 12 weeks after surgery you will have an appointment with the Cleft team. At this appointment you will have an x-ray to check if the bone is healthy and growing in the gum.

The Orthodontist will check if you have enough adult teeth erupting through the new bone to start braces. You may have braces on your top or bottom teeth only or on both. These will be in place for a short period of time while you continue to grow to help create a nice smile for your teenage years.

When you are 16-17 years old, your jaw growth should have slowed down. If you have a mismatch in your bite you may need another set of braces briefly to prepare for jaw surgery.

Who needs to have Jaw Surgery?

If your top teeth sit behind your bottom teeth (Class III malocclusion or under bite) surgery may be recommended. Even if you don't need to have jaw surgery, you may still need braces to help straighten your teeth and improve your smile.

Finally you are at the end of your cleft journey.

After all your orthodontic work is done, there may still be aspects of your appearance which bother you. Please let us know and we will arrange for you to see your surgeon to discuss any concerns you may have.

For Parents

When to see your GP

- If your child is in pain and pain relief does not seem to help
- If there are signs of infections such as redness, swelling, oozing or odour from the operation sites
- Your child is not eating or drinking
- Fever
- Bleeding from the operation sites

If you have any concerns please contact the Cleft Clinical Nurse Specialist

Contact Details:

Cleft Clinical Nurse Specialist
09 276 0044 ext 58922
021 574 434

Counties Manukau Health Values

We aspire to live and breathe our values every day as the foundation of our strategic goal to achieve health equity for our community:



VALUING EVERYONE – Make everyone feel welcome and valued

KIND – Care for other people’s wellbeing

TOGETHER – Include everyone as part of the team

EXCELLENT – Safe, professional, always improving

The Code of Rights

This means that you should have

1. Respect and privacy
2. Fair treatment
3. Dignity and independence
4. Proper standards
5. Effective communication
6. Information
7. Your choice and decisions
8. Support
9. Rights during teaching & research
10. Your complaints taken seriously



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