Should I go back to my own dentist?
Yes, it is very important that you maintain excellent oral hygiene and regular dental visits must be a priority.

What if I need to have teeth out in the future?
You must make sure your dentist knows about your history of radiotherapy before carrying out any extractions in the future. Depending on the tooth to be extracted, you may be referred to a hospital dental department.

Golden rules to prevent tooth decay
■ Brush your teeth twice daily with a fluoride containing toothpaste, always ‘spit don’t rinse’ after brushing your teeth.
■ Reduce frequency of intake of sugary foods and drinks.
■ Limit the consumption of sugary foods and drinks to mealtimes.
■ Visit your dentist regularly.

Useful contact information
Shelley Oliver
Woking Dental Access Centre
Woking Community Hospital
Heathside Road, Woking GU22 7HS
Telephone: 01483 721546

Anne Twomey
Guildford Dental Access Centre
61 Buryfields, Guildford GU2 4AX
Telephone: 01483 783312

Anne Hope
Network Macmillan Head & Neck Clinical Nurse Specialist
St Lukes Cancer Centre
Egerton Road, Guildford GU2 7XX
Telephone: 01483 406695

Shobana Srinivasan
Head & Neck Clinical Nurse Specialsit
Frimley Park Hospital
Portsmouth Road
Camberley
Surrey GU16 7UJ
Telephone: 01276 522382

Key reference source:
www.mouthcancerfoundation.org

Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) NHS Foundation Trust fully subscribes to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) Being Open best practice framework, November 2010.

PALS and Advocacy contact details
Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757
Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net
Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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FAQ’s about your dental health and treatment

What changes should I expect in my mouth as a result of radiotherapy?
Following radiotherapy you may notice a reduction in the amount of saliva you produce, leading to you experiencing a dry mouth. This in turn can cause an increase in dental decay, increased risk of infections developing in your mouth as well as areas of soreness. You may also notice an alteration in taste.

When will the effects of radiotherapy wear off?
Some effects wear off once the radiotherapy has finished. Others, such as dry mouth may last much longer. This may depend on the site of your tumour and therefore the area that has been treated with radiotherapy. The effects of radiotherapy on your jaws will remain for life, so it is very important that you always inform your dentist of your history of radiotherapy.

How does radiotherapy affect my teeth?
Because radiotherapy can lead to you having a dry mouth you are much more prone to dental decay and gum infections.

If I need to have my teeth extracted before radiotherapy can I have some dentures made?
Yes, but not for at least 6 months after radiotherapy has finished, sometimes longer. This is to make sure your gums have had sufficient time to heal after the extractions and radiotherapy. The dentures should be made by your own dentist – if you do not have a regular dentist we can advise you where you can access NHS care.