



## What is this operation?

There are two types of mouth biopsy:

**Excisional:** This means that the lump or area in your mouth causing problems will be removed completely.

**Incisional:** This means that a small sample of the problem area will be removed.

In either case the specimen will be sent to the hospital histopathology department for analysis under the microscope. The doctor has recommended that you have a mouth biopsy done. This decision was made after examining your mouth and listening to any problems you have with your mouth.

## Do I really need this operation?

Most lumps in the mouth are quite harmless. We recommend that they are removed if you keep biting them and making them bleed or they get in the way when you eat; or if they are sore and cause you some discomfort or pain.

Once removed your symptoms will go and eating will be more comfortable. If you have sore patches in your mouth the biopsy will allow us to find out what is causing the problem and where possible, offer treatment to improve your symptoms. Cancer of the mouth is still very rare but, naturally, any suspicious lumps are best removed then we can put your fears to rest and stop you worrying unnecessarily.

## How is the operation carried out?

The operation usually takes twenty to thirty minutes and is done under a local anaesthetic. The area is numbed with an injection (just like at the dentist). A small cut is made around the lump or sore patch, the sample is cut out then the edges sewn together with dissolvable stitches. The stitches will dissolve after about ten to fourteen days.

If the lump is on your tongue the operation is the same: part of your tongue will be numb but you will be able to breathe, swallow and speak. We may need to gently hold the tip of your tongue with some gauze so that it does not move around during the operation.

## How do I agree to the operation?

You must give your written consent to any operation in hospital. When you come to the hospital for the operation the doctor will explain what it involves and you will be asked to sign a consent form. You will be given your own copy.

## What should I expect afterwards?

**Pain:** There will be some pain and discomfort once the numbness has worn off. You may need to take some mild pain killing tablets for the first twenty four hours.

**Swelling:** There is usually some swelling which will get better after the first two to three days.

**Work/Sport:** You should take the day of the operation off work but should be able to return to normal working and sport activities the day afterwards.

## What should I do next?

You will either be given a date when the procedure will be done when you attend the clinic or the Admissions Officer will send you a letter asking you to phone and agree a date and time that is convenient when the operation can be done.

You will be sent further information on what you need to do and where you go on arrival. You will be able to discuss any questions you may have with the doctor before you sign the consent form.

After the operation you will be given another information leaflet with advice on what to do and how to care for your mouth.

In the meantime if you have any more problems or questions please phone the nursing staff on the telephone number on the back of this leaflet.

## Additional information

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

## Reference source

[www.BAOMS.org.uk](http://www.BAOMS.org.uk)