

Patient information sheet – Facial fractures and injuries

What are the usual kinds of facial fractures and injuries?

Any facial bone can be fractured due to trauma. The common injuries are fractures of the mandible (Lower jaw), maxilla (Upper jaw), Zygoma (Cheek bones), Nasal bones, Frontal bone (Forehead), Orbital (Eye socket), Pan facial (All bones) etc.

Sometimes, there could only be soft tissue injuries like abrasions (Grazes) and lacerations (Cuts), without any bone injury.

Road traffic accidents, Falls, Assault and sports injuries are the common causes for these kind of injuries.

How is it diagnosed?

After a thorough physical examination by your surgeon, he might order some facial X-rays like X ray PNS (Paranasal sinuses) and OPG (Orthopantomogram). The gold standard for diagnosis is a CT scan of the head with 3D reconstruction. This will not only help in diagnosis, but also help in the planning of the surgery.

What does the surgery involve?

The patient will be seen by our anaesthetist before the surgery. The surgery is conducted under general anaesthesia and takes about 2-3 hours. Cuts are usually made inside the mouth, inside the eyelids or in the hairline to avoid any kind of scar. The fractured bones are brought back into position and fixed with Titanium plates and screws. Dr Vybhav uses Matrix plating system or Synthes plating system which is the best in the world. In eye socket injuries, sometimes an implant (Medpore/Synpore) might have to be used as well to reconstruct the orbital floor. Surgical wounds are closed with absorbable stitches. All the cuts on the face are stitched meticulously with very fine sutures. All the grazes are cleaned and ointment applied. Discharge will be usually on the next day.

What happens after surgery?

You might notice some mild oozing of blood from the nose and the mouth which is normal. There might be considerable swelling of the face which improves over a week. You will be advised to do regular mouthwashes to keep all the wounds clean. You will also be provided with ointments to apply to the facial injuries. A check X ray might be conducted on the next day of surgery before discharge. If you had a fracture, you will be advised to be on soft diet for the next 3 weeks. In some fractures, you might also have some screws and rubber bands placed in your mouth which will stay for 3 weeks. There will be a follow up appointment after 1 week to check the wound and the stitches are removed.

What complications can I expect?

Infection, bleeding, swelling, bruising and pain are common complications that can happen. The pain will be managed by our acute pain service team while in the hospital. Complications specific to the fracture will be discussed with you by the surgeon during your consultation. The titanium plates and screws are biocompatible and stay in the body permanently. They do not activate the alarms in airports and frisking. They need not be taken out unless there is an infection and exposure of the implant, which is very rare.

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I have a few more questions. What do I do?

Kindly write to us at contact@drvybhavderaje.com. We will be happy to reply to any of your questions and concerns.

Disclaimer: This information sheet is for you to get a general idea about the condition and surgery. This is in no way a substitute for a formal consultation with your doctor.