

Genioplasty

This leaflet explains more about genioplasty, including the benefits, risks and any alternatives and what you can expect when you come to hospital. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is a genioplasty?

A genioplasty is a procedure to change the shape of the chin. This can be to make the chin more prominent, less prominent or to correct an asymmetry. The procedure involves making a cut in the skin on the inside of the mouth so the scar is hidden and then in the jaw bone below the level of the teeth roots, and moving the bone before fixing it with plates and screws in a new position. The gum inside the mouth is then stitched back into place with dissolvable stitches that can take a fortnight or even longer to fall out. This procedure is performed under a general anaesthetic (completely asleep) and can be performed alongside other surgery such as orthognathic surgery and septorhinoplasty.

How can I prepare for a genioplasty?

Following your assessment in the clinic by the surgical team, you will be given an appointment date to attend the pre-assessment clinic. This is to ensure that you are fit enough to have the anaesthetic and the surgery. The nurse will check your general health and may have to carry out further tests. The nurse will also give you verbal and written fasting instructions and inform you of the medication you should or should not take prior to your procedure. The day before the procedure you will be called by the booking team to let you know when and where to attend. Smoking adversely affects healing after septorhinoplasty and may increase your chances of infection. If you smoke, it is likely that the surgeon will ask you to quit before you can be considered for this surgery. A cooling machine may be available in hospital to help reduce post-operative swelling, these can be hired in advance for home use.

What are the risks of a genioplasty?

There are potential complications with any operation. Fortunately with this type of surgery complications are rare however, it is important that you are aware of some of them and have the opportunity to discuss them with your surgeon.

- Bleeding – some oozing from the cuts inside your mouth on the night of operation is normal and to be expected. Significant bleeding is very unusual

but should it occur it can usually be stopped by applying pressure over the area for at least 10 minutes with a rolled up handkerchief or swab.

- Bruising – the extent of bruising varies among patients and can take a few weeks to months to clear completely after surgery.
- Numbness – your bottom lip will be numb and tingly after the operation, similar to the sensation after having an injection at the dentist. In 10 out of 100 patients this numbness can last for several weeks to months, in fewer than 2 out of 100 patients the numbness may be permanent.
- Infection – the small plates and screws that hold your jaw in its new position are usually left in place permanently. In fewer than 5 out of 100 patients the plates can become infected and need to be removed.

How long is the recovery after a genioplasty?

Immediately after the operation your chin will feel swollen and tight. Swelling and bruising is variable but is generally worse 48-72 hours after the operation. Most of the swelling will disappear after two weeks but there is often some subtle swelling that can take several months to disappear. Some patients are able to go home on the same day following a genioplasty procedure, otherwise patients may stay overnight in hospital

What are the alternatives to a genioplasty?

It is your choice whether you go ahead with a genioplasty and there is no risk to not having treatment. You should work with your surgical team to weigh the benefits and risks of surgery in your case, in order to come to a decision about your treatment. It is very important that you are well-informed about your procedure and that you have realistic expectations about what the procedure can achieve in your particular case. Discuss any concerns you may have with your surgical team. It is always better to take more time to consider your options, rather than to go ahead with an operation about which you are unsure. Some patients are offered psychological support before and after their procedure if this is felt to be beneficial. If you choose not to have a genioplasty, this decision can be revisited in future if you change your mind.

What care do I need after a genioplasty?

It is not a particularly painful operation but it is still likely to be sore and regular painkillers will be through a vein in your arm whilst you are in hospital. You will be sent home with painkillers and a course of antibiotics. If you are having a genioplasty carried out on its own you should have little problem with eating although you may well start with a soft diet and then gradually build up to normal food over a few days. You may brush your teeth from the same day after the procedure. A follow up appointment will be arranged for you to see your surgeon. It is also necessary to

make sure that the area heals without any infection and so you will be given antibiotics

Do I need to take any time off work?

This varies from person to person and also depends on what kind of job you do. We recommend that most people have one week off work. It is important to remember that you will not be able to drive or operate machinery for 48 hours after your general anaesthetic. What are the possible problems?