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Patient information

Information about dentistry for people with inherited bleeding disorders (IBD)



Introduction

You have an inherited bleeding disorder, and it is important that you receive regular dental care. This leaflet explains where to go for both routine and more complex care.

It is not always necessary for patients with bleeding disorders to attend a hospital for their dental treatment. Routine check-ups, simple cleaning and some dental work can be carried out safely by your local dentist, as explained here.

The Haemophilia Centres at The Royal London Hospital, The Royal Free Hospital and Hammersmith Hospital are part of a network for patients with inherited bleeding disorders. Within this network the Dental Institute and The Haemophilia Centre at The Royal London Hospital can oversee and provide the appropriate dental treatment that cannot be done safely in the community, for patients with bleeding disorders in the network.

The benefit of having your dental treatment in this way is that all the expertise needed to look after your dental health and your bleeding disorder is on the same site. The Dental Institute has leading specialists in dental and oral health care and treats a diverse range of oral health issues, including emergency dental care.

To make sure you can take full benefit from this pathway for dental care, you should be given a “Dental Liaison letter” by staff at your Haemophilia centre to give to your local dentist. Your local dentist can then refer you to the Dental Institute at The Royal London for appropriate interventions or treatment, as required.

If you are referred for dental treatment at the Dental Institute, you should be given the patient information booklet ‘Oral Health for people with inherited bleeding disorders (IBD) in the North London Adult Haemophilia Network’ for further information.

For further information please speak to your haemophilia centre.

How to contact your haemophilia centre

The Royal London Hospital
2nd Floor Central Tower
Whitechapel
London E1 1BB

Telephone – 020 3594 1869

Email to: bhnt.haemophiliacentre@nhs.net
Opening times: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

Local anaesthetic techniques that need to be carried out in a dental hospital are:

Inferior dental block –

The inferior alveolar nerve block is used for treating lower molar teeth. This can usually be avoided by using an Articaine infiltration. However, if one is required, your local dentist should refer you to a dental hospital.

Lingual infiltration –

If a lingual infiltration is to be given, your local dentist should refer you to a dental hospital.

Intraligamentary injections –

This type of injection is uncommon, and as there is a slight risk of bleeding into the surrounding tissues, it is best avoided in patients lingual with inherited bleeding disorders.

Prevention of dental diseases

The most common dental problems are:

- Gum disease
- Tooth decay
- Tooth wear

Everyone is at risk of developing any of these problems and their prevention is especially important in people with bleeding disorders to reduce the need to have any invasive dental treatment which could cause bleeding.

Preventing these problems involves reducing your intake of sugary and acidic foods and drinks, cleaning your teeth regularly and well, and not smoking.

How you can help yourself at home:

Regular check-ups with your dentist are advised so that they can monitor your oral health and notice any signs of disease early on. This will avoid needing more complex treatment.

You can prevent the common dental disease by good oral care at home:

- Brush your teeth twice a day for 2 minutes using fluoridated toothpaste (1350ppm-1500ppm)
- Tilt the brush so the bristles are at 45 degrees & pointing towards the gum line. Brush in a circular motion.
- Don't rinse your mouth immediately after brushing, as it'll wash away the concentrated fluoride in the remaining toothpaste.

- Interdental cleaning once a day – flossing or using interdental brushes.
- Reduce the frequency of sugary snacks and drinks in your diet to prevent tooth decay (try to consume sugary foods only at mealtimes and limit to 3-4 sugary foods a day).

Types of dental treatment

Prevention advice

Your local dentist can give you advice on how to prevent dental disease at any routine appointment. This might include dietary advice, showing you how to clean your teeth and advice on how to stop smoking.

Hygiene treatment

Routine hygiene treatment is unlikely to cause any bleeding problems. However, if your gum condition is poor and you need a local anaesthetic before they clean under the gums you *might* need to be referred to the hospital.

Removable dentures

Making dentures to replace missing teeth can safely be carried out by a local dentist.

Repairing teeth

Repairs might involve fillings, crowns or bridges to replace missing teeth. Some of these treatments can be carried out by your local dentist but it will depend on the type of injection you need (see below).

Root canal fillings

Placing root canal fillings should not cause any bleeding problems, but again it will depend on the type of injection you need (see below).

Removal of teeth and surgery

Tooth removal or surgery usually needs to be carried out in a dental hospital so that you can have treatment beforehand to make sure you will stop bleeding afterwards. This would be arranged by the dental hospital team and administered by the haemophilia team.

Local anaesthesia/injections

Some injections – an inferior dental nerve block or a infiltration – can cause bleeding. They should therefore be done in a dental hospital. Others can be safely carried out by a local dentist. Please show this to your dentist for their information.

Local anaesthetic techniques that can be safely done by a local dentist are:

Buccal infiltration –

Buccal infiltration can be used for anaesthetising the upper teeth and some of the lower teeth (premolars, canines, and incisors). Lower molars can be anaesthetised using an injection called Articaine.

Intra-papillary injections –

These may be used for anaesthetising any teeth that require small fillings or for cleaning sensitive teeth.