
Prostheses

What are prostheses and how can they help me after surgery?

As a result of cancer treatment or trauma (even after reconstructive surgery), you might have missing teeth, or other gaps in tissue. These can be replaced by a wide variety of custom-made prostheses.

In general, prostheses are 'spare parts'.

After mouth or face cancer or surgery for trauma, prostheses might be required, which include facial parts (such as an eye, ear, nose, and/or parts of the cheek or neck), adapted dentures or fixed crowns/bridges that replace teeth, bony parts of the jaw or soft tissues.

The design and construction of prostheses is both an art and science and they can give a very acceptable 'cosmetic' and functional result.

If you might need a prosthesis after surgery, this will be explained to you by your oral and maxillofacial surgeon, who will arrange for you to be seen by a maxillofacial technician and/or a restorative/prosthetic dental surgeon.

Often the facial skeleton, teeth or dentures are used to hold a prosthesis in place.

What are obturators?

Some people have part of their palate missing because of a defect they were born with or perhaps because of surgery for mouth cancer or trauma.

This gap can interfere with speaking, swallowing, chewing etc but can be filled with a prosthesis called an obturator, which just means something that blocks a hole.

These are usually held in place by the remaining teeth, implanted supports or as an extension to a denture.