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## **Orthognathic Surgery**

Orthognathic surgery is Corrective Jaw Surgery aimed at improving the relationship between the upper and lower jaws and teeth. This often results in an improved facial profile and appearance, improved jaw function and chewing ability and improved speech in some cases.

Orthognathic surgery is sometimes called "surgical orthodontics" because the treatment involves both orthodontics and surgery in most cases. Jaw growth is a gradual process, and in some instances, the upper and lower jaws may grow at different rates. The result can be a host of problems that can affect chewing function, speech, long-term oral health, and appearance. Injury to the jaw and birth defects can also affect jaw alignment. While orthodontics alone can correct many bite problems if only the teeth are involved, Orthognathic surgery may be required if the jaws also need repositioning.

Orthognathic surgery is performed by highly trained Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons who work closely with a specialist Orthodontist. Often the Orthodontist will coordinate the treatment process, which typically takes 12 to 24 months to complete. There are several stages involved in the treatment process:

- ***Treatment planning***
- ***Pre-orthodontic treatment***
- ***Pre-surgical orthodontics***
- ***Surgery***
- ***Post-surgical orthodontics***

## **Treatment planning**

This form of treatment requires a 'team approach' to produce the best outcome. The Orthodontist and Surgeon will spend several visits with you planning your treatment. This typically involves having dental impressions and casts made, having special facial and jaw X-rays performed as well as having photographs and facial measurements taken. This information will be used to formulate a plan for your treatment. You will be involved in the decision making process at all times, and you are encouraged to ask any questions that you have regarding your treatment. When you are fully informed about the aspects of your care and the costs involved, you and your dental team will make the decision to proceed with treatment together.



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## **Pre-Orthodontic Treatment**

It may be necessary to have teeth restored and filled prior to any orthodontic treatment. It is also common to have extractions to overcome crowding problems and to remove impacted teeth that would interfere with either the orthodontics or the jaw surgery.

## **Pre-Surgical Orthodontics**

Prior to corrective jaw surgery, it is necessary to straighten and align your teeth so that the jaws can be accurately positioned at the time of surgery. This typically takes between 6 and 18 months. When the orthodontist feels you are ready for surgery, you will be referred back to the surgeon to plan the details of the surgery.

## **Corrective Jaw Surgery**

Your jaw surgery involves admission to hospital for an operation under general anaesthetic. Typically you remain in hospital for 2 to 4 days and then spend the next week or so recovering at home.

Immediately after surgery you will experience mild facial swelling and your jaws will feel stiff. There is usually minimal pain, and you can commence eating a soft diet almost immediately. You often have a degree of facial numbness that resolves gradually, and you may develop some bruising after surgery.

It is necessary to attend regular review appointments with the surgeon after surgery to monitor healing and jaw position, and you will then re-commence your orthodontics.

## **Post-Surgical Orthodontics**

It is typical to continue orthodontic treatment for several months following surgery to achieve the final accurate teeth and Jaw alignment.

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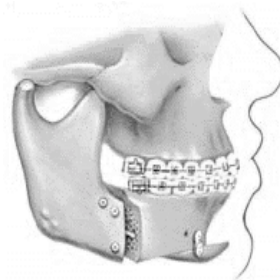
## Who Needs Orthognathic Surgery?

The following examples illustrate two more common conditions that are corrected by Orthognathic Surgery

*People who have a receding lower jaw are candidates for Orthognathic surgery. This condition is known as "retrognathia", and is medically referred to as a **Class 2** discrepancy.*



*To correct retrognathia, the jaw is moved forward from behind the teeth and is held in place using plates and screws. It is often also necessary to reposition the chin, and occasionally the upper jaw at the same operation to give the best results.*



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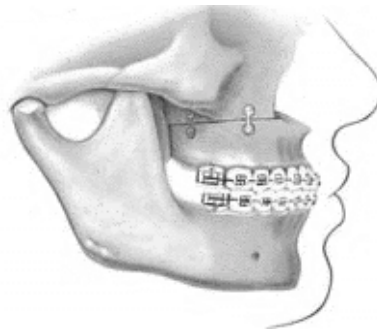
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*A prognathic jaw occurs when the lower jaw protrudes out beyond the upper jaw. This may be due to an over developed lower jaw or an underdeveloped upper jaw. This is medically known as a **Class 3** discrepancy.*



*When the upper jaw is under developed, it is surgically repositioned forwards and secured in place with plates and screws. If the lower jaw is over developed, it is repositioned backwards.*



These examples serve to illustrate more common aspects of jaw surgery. The details of your treatment plan will be discussed at length with you and will include prediction of your post-operative appearance. You are encouraged to discuss any aspect of your treatment at any stage.



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***GENIOPLASTY: Chin repositioning***

Orthognathic surgery is Corrective Jaw Surgery aimed at improving the relationship between the upper and lower jaws, teeth, and/or improvement of facial profile

Orthognathic surgery is sometimes called "surgical orthodontics" because the treatment usually involves both orthodontics and surgery. Occasionally surgery alone is required independent of the teeth position, and an isolated genioplasty is one such example.

Jaw growth is a gradual process, and in some instances, the upper and lower jaws may grow at different rates. The result can be a host of problems that can affect chewing function, speech, long-term oral health, and appearance. Injury to the jaw and birth defects can also affect jaw alignment. While orthodontics alone can correct many bite problems if only the teeth are involved, Orthognathic surgery may be required if the jaws also need repositioning.

Orthognathic surgery is performed by highly trained Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons who work closely with a specialist Orthodontist.

A common Orthognathic surgical procedure is the Genioplasty procedure. This procedure involves placing bone cuts in the chin in such a design to enable the repositioning of the chin position in three-dimensions (i.e. Height, width and projection). The chin is held in its new determined position by very fine titanium plates and screws that do not normally need removal.

The surgery does result in mild swelling and minor discomfort that is usually well controlled by medications. You may get temporary numbness around the surgical site due to the swelling affecting the sensation nerves of the chin and lip. This usually resolves soon after surgery. The risk of persisting numbness is very low.

You will be involved in the decision making process at all times, and you are encouraged to ask any questions that you have regarding your treatment. When you are fully informed about the aspects of your care and the costs involved, you can make the decision to proceed with treatment.



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## **PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE**

In addition to the surgical fees, there are hospital and anaesthetic fees you need to consider for your proposed procedure.

### **Private Hospital Fees**

If you have private health insurance, the fees are normally billed directly to your private health fund.

Depending on your level of hospital cover, there may be some out of pocket expense involved. You are advised to check with your health fund what you are covered for.

If you are uninsured, private hospital fees will be significant and are payable in full at the time of admission. Please note there is NO Medicare rebate for private hospitals fees.

**You are strongly advised to obtain private health insurance as soon as possible to help reduce your out of pocket expense. Private health insurance generally has a qualifying period of approximately 12 months for elective surgery.**

### **Anaesthetic Fees**

You may be able to claim a rebate from Medicare and your private health fund. There will be some out of pocket expense as well.

### **Surgical Fees**

You may be able to claim a rebate from Medicare and your private health fund. There will be an out of pocket expense as well. A quotation of fees will be given to you. **Please check with your private health fund regarding your entitlements prior to your surgery.**



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## **FEE POLICY FOR DENTAL & MEDICAL SERVICES**

Dear Patient,

We are committed to providing the highest level of patient care at all times while keeping costs reasonable. Our fees reflect the extensive training and skill of your surgeon, and the genuine costs of running a high quality specialist practice.

The cost of some procedures, such as dental implants and complex jaw surgery, are a reflection of the complexity of the surgery as well as the significant cost of materials needed for the procedures.

Fees for consultations and procedures classified as **MEDICAL** are claimable through Medicare. Private insurance may also cover part of these fees. **You are advised to check with your private health fund what you are covered for.**

Fees for consultations and procedures classified as **DENTAL** are *not* claimable through Medicare. If you have dental extras cover you will get a rebate. Each health fund determines what level it will rebate based on its own commercial requirements. In most instances the insurance company will cover less than half the cost of an oral surgical procedure.

**In most instances we require payment prior to the day of surgery.**

If you have **ANY** difficulties or queries regarding payment, please contact our rooms as soon as possible, as late payments may attract an accounting and processing surcharge.

Thank you.