



The Benefits of Corrective Jaw Surgery (Orthognathic Surgery)

Orthognathic (jaw) surgery helps to treat an abnormal bite, jaw size discrepancy (different sized jaws) and jaw asymmetry (uneven jaw). It can also help improve facial appearance (how your face looks). In this handout, you will learn what to expect if your surgeon recommends jaw surgery. You will also learn how to decide if jaw surgery is right for your child.

WHAT IS CORRECTIVE JAW SURGERY?

Corrective jaw surgery (also called **orthognathic surgery**) is an operation that helps to fix many problems with the teeth and jaws. Corrective jaw surgery is done by **oral and maxillofacial surgeons** who operate on the jaw, teeth and face.

WHICH PROBLEMS CAN THIS SURGERY CORRECT?

- Overbite or underbite
- Open bite (when the upper and lower teeth do not touch even when the mouth is closed)
- Injuries to the face
- Worn-down teeth
- Birth defects
- Protruding jaw (bottom jaw that sticks out in front of the top jaw)
- Unbalanced appearance on one or both sides of the face (also called **facial asymmetry**)
- Chronic (long-term) mouth breathing and dry mouth
- Certain types of sleep apnea (breathing problems while sleeping)

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF SURGERY?

Corrective jaw surgery has many benefits, including:

- Improving how you look and feel about yourself
- Better jaw function (how your jaw works)
- Better breathing, speaking and chewing
- Improving teeth and jaw problems with a combination of braces and other types of **orthodontia** (dental devices like retainers or Invisalign®)

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WANT TO HAVE SURGERY?

Talk with your dentist, orthodontist or oral and maxillofacial surgeon. With their help, you can decide if corrective jaw surgery is right for you.

Did you know?

Corrective jaw surgery is part of your journey toward better oral health. It is not one unique solution to fix problems with your jaws or teeth. Orthodontics, X-rays and models of your teeth are part of the process before and after surgery.

It can take months or years to get your mouth ready for surgery. It can also take between 9 months to 1 year for your mouth to fully heal after surgery. Having corrective jaw surgery and the steps along the way are a long-term commitment for you and your family. Your dentist, orthodontist and oral surgeon will give you a realistic timeline. They will also tell you what to expect every step of the way.