

MF02lite Removing a Submandibular Gland

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Andrew J Sidebottom

BDS (Hons) FDSRCS (Eng) MBChB (Hons) FRCS (Eng) FRCS (OMFS)
Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon

NHS

Maxillofacial Unit
Queens Medical Centre, Derby Road, Nottingham
Tel: -44 115 924 9924 ext 65895

Private

Julie Riley
BMI Park Hospital, Arnold, Nottingham
Tel: - 44 115 9662125
Email: jriley@bmihospitals.co.uk

www.andrewsidebottom.com



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This document will give you information about removing a submandibular gland. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What are the submandibular glands?

The submandibular glands are salivary glands. There are two, one on either side of your neck, under the jawbone (see figure 1).

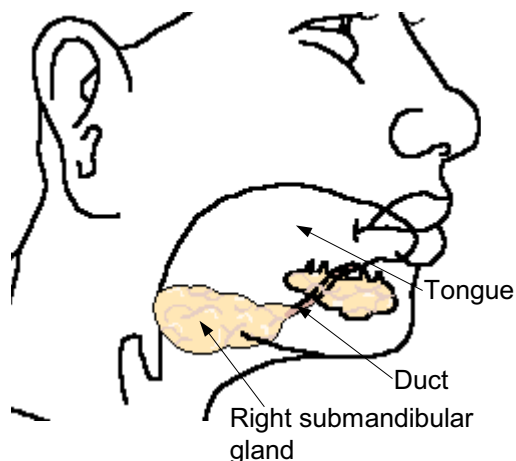


Figure 1

Position of the right submandibular gland

A submandibular gland may need removing for a variety of reasons such as repeated infection, obstruction, unexplained enlargement or too much saliva being produced.

What are the benefits of surgery?

Surgery should take away symptoms of swelling, pain and an unpleasant taste in the mouth, and can help find out the cause of an enlarged gland.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Some obstructions can be treated without having to remove the gland. Medication can control the amount of saliva you produce, if you are producing too much.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes between three-quarters of an hour and an hour. Your surgeon will make a cut in the skin of your neck just under your jaw. They will remove the gland and may insert a drain (small tube).

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Unsightly scarring

2 Specific complications

- Damage to nerves
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)

How soon will I recover?

The drain is usually removed the day after the operation.

You should be able to go home after one to two days or occasionally the same day.

The stitches are usually removed seven to ten days after the operation. Most people are then able to return to work.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. However, you should not do any exercise for one week after the operation. Before you start exercising, you should ask a member of the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Summary

A problem with a submandibular gland can cause swelling, pain and an unpleasant taste in the mouth. Removing the gland will take away the symptoms and can help find out the cause of an enlarged gland.

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Author: Mr Andrew Sidebottom FDSRCS FRCS
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