

MF05lite Mandibular Sagittal Split Osteotomy

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This document will give you information about a sagittal split osteotomy. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a sagittal split osteotomy?

A sagittal split osteotomy is an operation to change the position of your lower jaw so your teeth can be aligned. There is a limit to how far your orthodontist can use orthodontics (braces) to move your teeth. It is not possible to complete the alignment of your teeth without improving the position of your lower jaw.

What are the benefits of surgery?

Your orthodontist should be able to align your teeth so they bite together in the best way for long-term stability. The appearance of your face should also improve.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Your orthodontist can sometimes just use braces to straighten your teeth. However, it is unlikely that your teeth will bite together properly. You will usually need a permanent wire across the back of your teeth or to wear a splint at night for the rest of your life to keep your teeth in place.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes about one hour.

Your surgeon will make cuts inside your mouth and may need to make small cuts in your cheeks. They will use instruments to separate the lower jaw (see figure 1). Your surgeon will move your jaw and fix it in the correct position using plates and screws.



Figure 1
Sagittal split osteotomy

What complications can happen?

1 General complications of any operation

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Bruising and swelling of your jaw and mouth
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Blood clots

2 Specific complications of this operation

- Numbness of the lower lip
- The jaw not separating as planned
- Not being able to open the mouth fully (trismus) and jaw stiffness
- Infection of the plates and screws
- Numbness in one or both sides of the tongue

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home after one to three days.

Most swelling and bruising will usually have settled after the third week.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, you should ask a member of the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

For the first four to six weeks you should eat only soft foods, moving on to solid food only when you can chew comfortably.

You should be able to return to work after two to four weeks depending on your type of work.

Summary

A sagittal split osteotomy is an operation to change the position of your lower jaw to help improve the way your teeth bite together. It is usually performed in addition to treatment by your orthodontist using braces.

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