

# Dr Alan Samakeh

BSc Hons (Syd), BDent Hons (Syd), MBBS (Syd), FRACDS (OMS)

**ORAL and MAXILLOFACIAL SURGEON**

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## **PENRITH:**

Somerset Private Hospital  
Suite 201,  
38 Somerset Street,  
Kingswood, NSW, 2747  
Provider number: 494058VY

## **WAHROONGA:**

Sydney Adventist Hospital  
Suite 220, Clark Tower,  
185 Fox Valley Road,  
Wahroonga, NSW, 2076  
Provider number: 494058WJ

## **PARRAMATTA:**

41 Albion Street,  
Harris Park, NSW, 2150  
Provider number: 6512448B

## **Post-Operative Instructions – TMJ Joint Replacement**

Post operative care after surgery is important to optimise the healing process and reduce complications. Please read the following instructions carefully and contact our rooms if you have any queries.

### **Immediately following surgery:**

When you wake up in recovery there will be sutures and overlying dressings over the wounds in front of your ears, neck and below your belly-button. Please keep your head dry and the dressings intact for 5 days following your procedure.

You will also wake up in recovery with your occlusal splint in your mouth. You can remove the splint before leaving the hospital, but please ensure you continue wearing your splint every night while you sleep.

You may have difficulty feeling your ears, lips, cheeks, tongue and palate due to numbness from the local anaesthetic administered during your surgery. Also due to the local anaesthetic, the muscles of your face may be weak, and you may not be able to raise your eye-brows or shut your eyes. This will wear off within 24 hours. Please take care not to bite your lips, cheeks and gums. If the numbness and muscle weakness persist more than 48 hours, please contact and notify us.

Checking and cleaning your ears is a normal part of the procedure. Therefore, you can expect small amounts of bleeding as well as a reduced hearing when you wake up in recovery. This should improve over the first week following your surgery.

A soft diet is recommended for the first 36 hours after surgery. You may then progress your diet gradually as your comfort level allows. Take the prescribed pain medications before the numbness from the local anaesthetic wears off.

Restrict your activities on the day of surgery and return to normal activities slowly. Your regular food and liquid intake has been reduced during and after your surgery, so you may get light headed, dizzy or weak. Place intermittent ice packs on the outside of the face (20 minutes on, 15 minutes off) as continuously as tolerable for the first 48 hours to decrease swelling. Make sure to get lots of rest on the day of your surgery. Avoid smoking and alcohol during the first 2 weeks after your surgery.

### **Bleeding:**

Slight bleeding and redness from your facial wounds and ears are normal in the first few days after your surgery. If excessive bleeding continues, please call our rooms or your nearest Public Hospital Emergency Department immediately.

### **Swelling:**

Swelling is normal after any surgical procedure, including the TMJ. The swelling will usually reach its maximum extent in 3 days, and gradually reduce thereafter. Persistent swelling after this time may indicate a post-operative infection, which should be reported to our rooms immediately. To help with post-operative swelling, use cold packs (as highlighted above), avoid lying flat and sit upright for the first 24-48 hours after your surgery.

**Pain:**

Please take your prescribed pain killers as discussed with your doctor to help with post-operative pain. Pain not controlled by medications should be reported to our rooms. Continue to take the prescribed pain medications as directed and as needed for pain relief.

**Infection:**

As highlighted above, swelling in the first 3-7 days represents normal post-operative inflammation. Ongoing or worsening swelling after this time can indicate post-operative infection. Other signs of infection include swelling that is painful, hard, hot, difficulty opening your mouth and/or a fever above 38°C. Post-operative infection is a serious complication and should be reported to our rooms immediately. Hospital admission may be required in some cases.

**Nausea and vomiting:**

After a general anaesthetic, you may feel nauseated and vomit. To help avoid this, do not take your medications on an empty stomach. Try to stay hydrated with liquids. You may sometimes feel nauseated from the prescribed opioid pain killers such as codeine or oxycodone. If this is the case try stopping the pain medications. If you have continued nausea and vomiting, please call our rooms for further instructions.

**Facial bruising and discolouration:**

After TMJ surgery, you may notice bruising and/or discolouration around the jaws. You may also notice the bruising migrate down your neck and chest with time. This is a normal post-operative healing processes and should subside after 2 weeks.

**Jaw tightness and limited mouth opening:**

This is normal following TMJ surgery and will improve over time. You may perform gentle jaw exercises to help increase your jaw opening. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, the use of a moist warm pack to the outside of your face will help relax the muscles. Please ensure you continue wearing your occlusal splint every night while your sleep.

**Sutures (stitches):**

Your sutures will dissolve on their own 2 weeks after surgery.

**Questions:**

Your well-being is our primary concern. It is our sincere desire that your experience be the least uncomfortable or anxiety provoking. Should you have any questions regarding your recovery, please do not hesitate to contact our office on 1300 49 49 79, or your surgeon Dr Alan Samakeh directly on 0438 665 760. In the event of an unexpected admission to a hospital related to treatment provided by Dr Alan Samakeh, please contact us directly.