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## **CORRECTIVE JAW SURGERY**

It has been determined that you are a possible candidate for a combination of orthodontics and corrective jaw (orthognathic) surgery. The following are a few important points that we would like all of our surgery patients to know prior to the initiation of orthodontic treatment. **Please read this handout thoroughly.**

Prior to the start of orthodontic treatment, or shortly after orthodontic appliances are placed, you should be seen by an oral and maxillofacial surgeon so that he or she can evaluate your condition and advise you as to the risks and benefits of orthognathic surgery. In addition, a decision must be made regarding the status of your third molars (wisdom teeth). Typically, the wisdom teeth in the involved jaw(s) should be removed at least six months prior to surgery.

In most instances, corrective jaw surgery is undertaken after orthodontic appliances are in place and orthodontic treatment is approximately 1/2 to 2/3rds completed. Following orthognathic surgery, your orthodontic appliances usually will be in place an additional six to twelve months. For patients with an estimated length of treatment of approximately two years, surgery will occur after the orthodontic appliances are in place for 12 to 18 months. It must be remembered, however, that our projected surgery date is **only an estimate**. The actual date of surgery is determined only after progress records are obtained during treatment.

Because corrective jaw surgery may be a benefit covered under your major medical insurance, the issue of insurance coverage for the surgery should be discussed in detail with the surgeon's office. You also will want to make sure that your major medical coverage is in force at the time of orthognathic surgery. Specific questions regarding insurance coverage and preauthorizations should be addressed directly with the surgeon, as our office is not involved in any way with the billing for surgical services.

As orthodontic treatment progresses, we will be taking a series of impressions to determine the appropriateness of the alignment of your teeth prior to surgery. We will not be able to set a final surgical date until your teeth have moved into their most ideal pre-surgical positions. It is a common observation by patients that their bite actually appears worse prior to surgery, as their teeth are straightened. This occurrence is normal and predictable. Should you have any questions regarding the progress of your treatment, please do not hesitate to ask the orthodontist.

After your teeth have been positioned in their most ideal presurgical positions, we then will refer you to the oral surgeon. After consultation between the orthodontist and surgeon, the surgeon's office will contact you to schedule a pre-surgical consultation and also inform you of possible surgical dates. It is at that time that you may wish to discuss with the surgeon, the most convenient time for you to undergo the surgical procedure. It is realistic to delay surgery in some instances so that the surgery will occur at a time that is most convenient for you to recuperate. (Typically, people require one to three weeks of recuperation before they can resume their usual activities.) While it often is possible to delay surgery without negative consequence, it is most difficult, or impossible, to speed up the date of surgery if the teeth are not yet in their proper positions.

Please contact our office if you have questions regarding your treatment. We would be happy to be of assistance.