

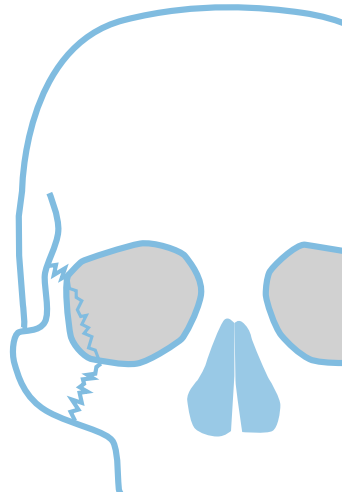
Facial Surgery Center Information Packet

Facial Fracture

CAMC General Hospital
General Medical Pavilion
415 Morris St., Suite 309
Charleston, WV 25301

(304) 388-3290
1-800-348-6099

David P. Wise, MD, DDS



*Facial Surgery
Center* AFFILIATED WITH
 Charleston Area
Medical Center

What is a facial fracture?

The facial bones make up and support the face. They include the orbit (bones around the eye), cheekbones, and the bones in the upper and lower jaw. A facial fracture is a break in one of these bones, which may take weeks or months to heal. An X-ray may show when the broken bone(s) is healed, but usually may take four to six months to see a repaired bone.

Causes

You may have broken a facial bone from an injury or accident.

Signs and symptoms

You may have swelling, pain, bruising or bleeding. Your face may be bruised, numb or tingle. Because of swelling or the break, your face may not look normal. You also may have double vision.

Care

You may need an X-ray or CT scan of your face. You may need surgery if you have a serious fracture. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen may help your pain. Caregivers may give you stronger medicine if you have a lot of pain. You may need antibiotic medicine if you have a break in your skin or gums. Gently put an ice pack on the skin over the break to lessen the swelling for the first few days. Do not press down hard on the broken bone.

Care agreement

You have the right to help plan your care. To help with this plan, you must learn about your health condition and how it may be treated. You can then discuss treatment options with your caregivers. Work with them to decide what care may be used to treat you. You always have the right to refuse treatment.

Risks

Without care, badly broken bones may not heal the right way, or in some cases, not heal at all. If this happens, your face may look misshapen. Your teeth also may not align properly if bones of the upper and lower jaws are injured. Call your caregiver if you are worried or have questions about your medicine or care.

While you are here

- **Gown:** A hospital gown is needed so that your caregivers can easily check and treat you. Put your gown on so that it opens in the back. When you feel better you may be able to wear your own gown or pajamas.
- **Call button:** You can use a call button when you need your caregiver. When you have pain or want to get out of bed are good reasons to call.

- **Vital signs:** This includes taking your temperature, blood pressure, pulse and respirations. To take your blood pressure, a cuff is put on your arm and tightened. The cuff is attached to a machine, which will give your blood pressure reading. Caregivers may listen to your heart and lungs by using a stethoscope. Your vital signs also may be taken so caregivers can see how you are doing.
- **Pulse oximeter:** A pulse oximeter is a machine that tells how much oxygen is in your blood. A cord with a clip or sticky strip is placed on your ear, finger or toe. The other end of the cord is hooked to a machine. Caregivers use this machine to see if you need more oxygen.
- **Oxygen:** You may need extra oxygen during your stay. It may be given through a plastic mask over the mouth and nose, or it may be given through nasal prongs (short, thin tubes in your nose). Tell your caregiver if the oxygen is drying out your nose or if the nasal prongs bother you. Don't take off your oxygen without asking your caregiver. If you do, your body may not have enough oxygen.
- **IV:** An IV is a tube placed in your vein for giving medicine or liquids. This tube will be capped or connected to tubing and liquid.
- **X-rays:** You may need more than one X-ray of your face while in the hospital. This lets caregivers see how your bones are healing or document plates and screws that may have been utilized.
- **CT ("CAT") scan:** This is a special X-ray machine that uses a computer to take pictures of your face. Your caregivers look at the pictures to see if there is a problem. Before taking the pictures, you may be given dye through an IV. The dye helps the face show up better in the pictures. People who are allergic to shellfish (e.g. lobster, crab or shrimp) may be allergic to this dye. Tell your caregiver if you are allergic to any of these foods.
- **Swelling:** You may want to raise your head above the level of your heart to lessen swelling. Sleep with your head elevated on a few extra pillows. Putting ice on your face will also help lessen the swelling in the acute stage of injury (the first few days).
- **Neuro signs:** Caregivers will check your eyes, memory and how easily you wake up. Your hand grasps and balance also may be checked. These signs help tell caregivers how your brain is working after an injury or illness.
- **Jaw wiring/banding:** Arch bars (metal appliance attached with wires) or rubber bands attached to screws that are placed through your gum tissue into the jawbones may be used to hold your jaw in place and keep it from moving. This will help the bones heal right way. Serious fractures may require incisions inside the mouth so that plates and screws may be placed to hold the jaw bones in place while they heal.
- **Mouth cleaning:** You will need to clean your mouth four to six times a day. Caregivers will show you how to do this. Cleaning your mouth will remove pieces of food and clean your teeth. A water pik or a child-sized soft toothbrush works well to clean your mouth (only after your caregiver gives approval to use it).

- **Eating/drinking:** You may need to use a straw to drink if your jaw is wired, banded or sore. You may not be able to eat foods that need to be chewed. Liquids may be all that you can swallow.

Medicines

- **Pain medicine:** Caregivers may give you medicine to lessen your pain. This medicine may be given in your IV, as a shot or by mouth. Tell caregivers if the pain does not go away or comes back.
- **Anti-nausea medicine:** This medicine may be given to calm your stomach and control vomiting. It will help you stop vomiting and will allow you to drink fluids. Drinking liquids will keep you from becoming dehydrated.

Surgery

You may need surgery to fix broken bones or bones that are out of position. This type of surgery is often called “open reduction” if it involves making incisions, or “closed reduction” if the bones can be manipulated back into place without making incisions.

After you leave

- Keep a written list of what medicines you take and when and why you take them. Bring the list of your medicines or the pill bottles when you see your caregivers. Learn why you take each medicine. Ask your caregiver for information about your medicines. Do not take any medicines without first talking to caregivers.
- Always take your medicines as directed by caregivers. Call your caregiver if you think your medicines are not helping or if you feel you are having side effects. Do not quit taking it until you discuss it with your caregiver. If you are taking antibiotics, take them until they are completely gone, even if you feel better.
- If you are taking medicine that makes you drowsy, do not drive or use heavy equipment.
- You may gently put ice on the injury for 15 to 20 minutes each hour for two days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a thin towel between the bag of ice and your face. Place this over the injured area for 15 to 20 minutes out of every hour as long as you need it. Do not press down hard on the broken bone. Do not sleep on the ice pack because you could get frostbite.
- You must keep the injured part of your face protected and safe until it is totally healed, which usually takes six to eight weeks.
- Do not play any rough sports or other activities until your caregiver says it is OK.
- You may gently wash and dry your face.
- Always wear head and face protection while riding a bicycle, motorcycle or snowmobile, and while playing contact sports.

After care

- **Oral care:** Carefully use a soft bristled toothbrush several times per day. Avoid any cuts inside the mouth. It is okay to brush arch bars gently. It may be sensitive at first, but gum tissues will get used to it. If you have IMF screws inside your mouth you need to brush gently around them to keep the gum tissue from growing over them. Keeping your mouth clean will keep your gum tissue healthy while your fractures heal and will also make removal of archbars and screws easier.
- **Wound care:** Always wash your hands before and after any wound care. Mix the same amounts of hydrogen peroxide with water or normal saline for cleaning. Cleanse external facial wounds gently at least two times per day to remove scabs and crusting. Apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment after cleaning if instructed to do so.
- **Wire/bands:** Always carry wire cutters at all times for emergency use by trained individuals. Wires should only be cut in emergency situations such as: choking, vomiting or when breathing becomes difficult. Notify the surgeon if wires are cut.

Call if:

- You develop a temperature of over 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- You have severe headaches.
- You have increased pain and swelling.
- You have a foul taste in your mouth.
- The wound is red, hot or drainage has a foul odor.

