



Patient Sticker

Risks of dental damage during Anaesthesia

What can cause dental damage?

Various pieces of anaesthetic equipment can cause dental damage. The following devices are often associated with damage to teeth so should be used with caution:

- Laryngoscope – Upper incisors can be damaged if used incorrectly
- Oropharyngeal airways – Teeth, crowns and bridgework can be dislodged or damaged if the airway is cleared using some force
- Jaw clamping – Use of a jaw clamp during light anaesthesia, particularly when used with an oropharyngeal airway, can put pressure on teeth
- Bite blocks can put pressure on teeth when used with a laryngeal mask airway or during oral fibre optic endoscopies
- Oropharyngeal suction devices may cause patients to clamp their jaw
- Dental props/mouth gags can damage teeth during insertion, removal or when they are moved from one side of the mouth to the other.

Where possible, discuss your choice of equipment with the patient before the procedure takes place. Outline the benefits and risks of each, and check that the patient freely consents to the use of a particular piece of equipment.

Who is most at risk?

All patients could potentially suffer dental damage during anaesthesia, but the risk is much greater if the patient already has an underlying dental condition. The following groups of patients are most commonly found to be at risk of dental damage during general anaesthesia:

- Children
- The elderly
- Any patients who have Crowns, veneers, dentures or bridgework
- Fillings
- Periodontal disease
- Protruding upper teeth
- Isolated teeth
- Conditions which mean their airway is obstructed.

Avoiding problems before the procedure

In all patients undergoing general anaesthesia, the anaesthetist should discuss the risks and be notified of any problems and/or damage prior to anaesthetics.

DESCRIPTION	LEFT	RIGHT	CENTER

I _____ have read and understand the above, and consent to the understanding of the risks of dental damage during Anaesthesia on myself/ my dependent.

Signed _____ Date _____

