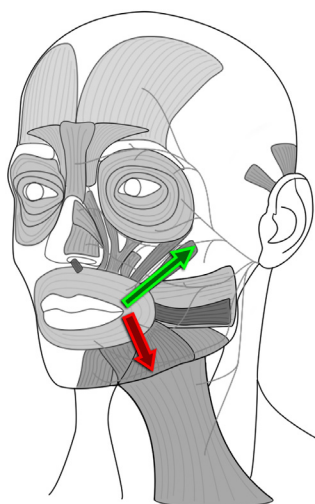


## Pre-operative Selective Myoneurectomy

### Patient Information Leaflet

#### Background

Selective Myoneurectomy is a procedure for synkinetic patients. Its goal is to improve facial comfort, enhance the coordination of facial movement and reduce muscle tightness. This is achieved by cutting the fifth branch of the facial nerve to the platysma muscle and/or the depressor muscle of the lip.



You have been offered this surgery because you are experiencing synkinesis in your platysma and lower face depressor muscles.

This is causing a downward muscle pull against the mid face muscles which normally act to create the smile movements.

The contraction of the platysma and depressor muscles creates a 'tug of war' inhibiting and restricting the smile muscles.

This surgery involves cutting the nerve to the platysma and depressor muscles to allow the smile muscles (elevators) to work more effectively, therefore leading to an improvement in the ability to smile with reduced effort and synkinesis. It also greatly improves comfort within the neck and lower face by reducing muscle tightness there.

#### Pre-operatively

You will discuss your suitability for this surgery with our multidisciplinary team, which consists of specialist facial therapists, psychological therapists and plastic surgeons. We will work with you to ensure that you are physically and psychologically ready for the surgery, and the post-operative rehabilitation. You will also be seen by the pre-operative nurses and anaesthetists before a surgical date is arranged to ensure that you are fit for surgery. Please feel free to ask questions at any stage of this process.

We will carry out a series of assessments before your operation. You will attend pre-assessment clinic and have photographs and/or videos taken in the medical photography department.

At the time you decide to go ahead with this surgery, you will need to be in contact with your facial therapist to start your pre-operative program of stretches. During this appointment, you will also have a chance to discuss the post-operative requirements.

**You will require pre-operative facial therapy – it is important to attend this otherwise you may not be able to proceed with your surgery.**

Before you are offered the surgery, you should have been through extensive facial therapy. You will need to continue to do your **daily** facial stretches and other specific exercises that you have been provided with by your therapist.

You may already be doing facial exercises, but please make sure you have an appointment to discuss this procedure. If you have not received an appointment for facial therapy before your surgery, then please call **01342 414004** to arrange this.

You should also have had several sessions of chemodenervation (Botulinum Toxin) to assess the effect on the platysma and depressor muscles as this will give a short acting trial of the permanent effects of cutting the nerve.

The training program that you will have undertaken before surgery will include massage, stretching and neuromuscular retraining. You must complete this or have come to a plateau of improvement before you progress onto surgery.

During the appointment with your surgeon you will have been provided with a lot of information. If you have any further questions please ask any member of the facial palsy team, who will be happy to clarify any information you are unsure of before your surgery. You will also have the opportunity to see your surgeon on the morning of surgery to ask any final questions.

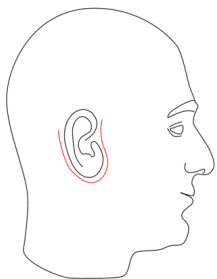
## What does the surgery involve?

This procedure involves your surgeon making an incision in front of your ear and separating the muscle, fat and skin to locate the nerve branches. The nerve branches are then tested using a nerve stimulator to identify the muscle they control. A section of the nerve and a strip of the platysma muscle is then removed to ensure that the connection between nerve and muscle is lost.

## How long will I be in theatre?

This procedure will take approximately 3 hours in theatre due to the intricate nature of the nerve location procedure. It can, in some cases, also be performed with other procedures and then this time scale might change.

## Will I have any scars?



Incisions will follow your facial contours to give a natural effect after surgery

With any surgical procedures, there will be scars. The scar position is designed to be hidden in your natural face contours to be less visible when healed.

## Will it be painful after surgery?

With any surgical procedure, there will be some pain. We will assess you before discharge to make sure you have adequate pain relief medication. You will experience a numb sensation over the area of skin that has been lifted and separated from muscle during the surgery. This is normal and will resolve over time.

## Will I have swelling after surgery?



During your surgery, you will have had a face mask supplied by your surgeon. This will be checked on the ward by the pressure garment team, who will show you how to put the mask on and take it off, and supply you with an additional mask, so that you can always wear a clean one. You will need to wear this mask for the first 2 weeks after your surgery.

Your facial swelling will peak at around 3 to 4 days after surgery and will be well controlled if you sleep with your head raised on pillows, wear the face mask and apply arnica ointment post-operatively. For the first two weeks after surgery you will need to wear this supportive face mask to reduce swelling. You should wear it day and night, except for bathing and eating (as required).

## What will happen after the operation?

Immediately after surgery

- You will stay in hospital for approximately 1 day.
- You will have bandages, sutures and a wound drain.
- You will be able to get up and walk around on the day of surgery as long as you feel well enough.
- Once you are medically stable we have removed the drain and you are able to perform daily tasks safely, you will be able to return home.
- You will leave hospital with a face mask which you need to keep on day and night for the first two weeks, removing it only for short periods of time, e.g. for eating and personal care.
- **Do not** massage your neck until you have seen your facial therapist for a post-operative follow up appointment.

## 2 weeks post-op

We will review your wounds in dressing clinic and remove any sutures (stitches).

## What is the therapy program after my operation?

The surgery is not the complete answer to improving your facial expressions. You will need to work on the co-ordination of muscle movements and relearn how to gently move your face.

You will re-start therapy between 2 and 4 weeks after your operation and we will give you a therapy appointment pre-operatively. If you do not have a therapy appointment **it is essential to call the therapy department** on 01342 414004 to arrange this.

You need to continue the neuromuscular training we will teach you after your surgery to improve the movements and expressions created by the smile muscles that have now been freed up. This may require a process of relearning and understanding how your face now moves. This is the most important part of this procedure, and your facial therapist will guide you through this.

We will organise monthly therapy sessions to assist you. They will focus on learning low effort facial movements. You may still be having therapy and or chemodenervation for other areas of your face and these will continue until you are able to cope with your rehabilitation on your own.

## How long will the effects of this surgery last?

This surgery is designed to provide a permanent change. It is a relatively new procedure and, therefore, we do not have long term evidence of whether the nerve connection will re-establish itself. We expect that the body will not re-grow any new nerve branches to the platysma and lip depressor muscles and, consequently, expect long term improvement in facial comfort and smile with reduced synkinesis.

**If you have any further questions, please ask a member of the facial palsy team.**

**01342 414004 0830-1500 Monday - Thursday**