



Queen Victoria Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Mandibular Advancement Appliances For Snoring and Obstructive Sleep Apnoea

Patient Information



Introduction

Queen Victoria Hospital offers a unique multidisciplinary service for our snoring and sleep apnoea patients. If you have been referred to the orthodontics department, we will examine you to see if you might benefit from an intra-oral device, known as the mandibular advancement splint. This service is usually provided to those individuals who have a range of symptoms including excessive sleepiness, impaired concentration and snoring who have had a positive diagnosis of obstructive sleep apnoea. Pure snoring without diagnosed sleep apnoea is not eligible for treatment within the NHS.

What is a mandibular advancement splint?

The mandibular advancement splint (MAS) is a custom made, simple, non-invasive treatment method used to alleviate snoring and mild to moderate sleep apnoea symptoms and can form the basis of definitive life-long treatment.

A widely accepted design of appliance includes a one-piece soft vinyl vacuum formed appliance, which fits over the top and bottom teeth (see below).



Another design of appliance is a two-piece hybrid splint, with one piece that fits onto your top teeth and another that fits onto your bottom teeth (see below).



Another common design includes the one-piece hard acrylic splint (below):



Am I suitable for a MAS?

At your initial appointment with us, you will be seen by a clinician who will assess whether or not a splint is suitable for you.

Please be aware that not everyone is suitable for this form of treatment.

If this treatment is recommended and you wish to proceed, we will place your name on our waiting list which is likely to be a few months.

You must be registered with a dental practitioner who can look after your teeth and monitor your overall oral health. You must be dentally fit before the fitting of any appliance. This means you must:

- be free of any dental decay
- have healthy gums
- not show any signs of soft tissue disease

If you do not meet these requirements, your treatment may be delayed or unable to go ahead.

How does the treatment work?

The appliance works in the mouth, by holding the mandible (lower jaw) forward. This will draw forward the tongue and soft palate and maintain or enlarge the airway space during sleep.

The effectiveness of the appliance depends on the:

- severity of the sleep disorder
- anatomy of the airway
- patient tolerance to the appliance

What is the success rate?

Generally, patients are screened before their referral to see if they are suitable for this device and at QVH we achieve success rates of around 85%.

Success rates vary depending on several factors including the initial diagnosis, the severity of the disorder and the type of appliance used.

How many appointments will I need?

Your treatment is likely to involve approximately four appointments. Following referral from a sleep specialist, the course of treatment includes:

Stage 1 – first consultation

At this appointment we will carry out your initial assessment including radiographs. We will go through your medical history in detail and check your teeth, oral health and jaws to help decide if a MAS will be right for you. It is important that you are dentally fit and that you don't have any outstanding dental work that needs to be done. If you do, we will ask you to return to your regular dentist to have this work done before you can progress with a MAS. Once you are deemed to be dentally fit, you will be added to the waiting list for treatment. It can take a few months to reach the top of the waiting list and progress with treatment.

Stage 2 - patient consent & clinical records

At this appointment we will talk you through your treatment plan and explain what is likely to be involved. Once you are happy, and have asked any questions you may have, we will ask for your consent. We will take impressions of your mouth in order to make moulds (models) of your upper and lower jaws. The technician uses these to make a splint to fit your mouth. As part of the impression process we will also take some clinical photographs.

Stage 3 – fitting of the splint

We will fit your splint within 6 to 8 weeks of your initial appointment and show you how to insert and remove it yourself. We will explain how to look after your splint (written instructions will be given). We will give you your models to keep safely at home.

We usually advise patients to wear their splint in the evenings only for the first one to two days to get used to it before wearing it at night.

Stage 4 - review

This will be a follow-up appointment to see how you are finding the appliance and if it is comfortable. If you are not noticing an improvement we may consider an alternative treatment approach. We may also ask to see you for a further review appointment.

However, if we are happy that the treatment is helping, you will be provided with further aftercare information and discharged. When we have concluded your treatment, we will ask you to complete a questionnaire regarding the success of the appliance which we will use to inform and improve our practice.

If you need to see us again regarding your splint within six months of being discharged, please contact the department directly. However, if you need to see us after this time you will need to be re-referred by your dentist or doctor.

What will I feel after the appliance is fitted?

You may notice some of the following symptoms after the short-term wear of an appliance:

- Tenderness of the facial muscles / jaw joints
- Altered bite/inability to find your normal bite
- Too much/too little saliva formation
- Some mobility associated with the teeth
- Non-resolution of snoring/apnoea symptoms

If these symptoms do not resolve or you have further questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

Instructions for wear and cleaning of the MAS

- Clean soft or hybrid splints with a toothbrush and liquid soap.
- Clean hard splints with a toothbrush and toothpaste.
- When not wearing the splint, wrap it in damp gauze or cloth and store it in a suitable container.

Maxillofacial and Orthodontics Department (Main Outpatients)

Tel: 01342 414419

Please ask if you
would like this leaflet
in larger print or an
alternative format.

Orthodontics Department

Issue 3 – Ref: no. 0450

Approved by the Patient Information Group

Print July 2022 – Review July 2025

© Copyright QVH NHS Foundation Trust

www.qvh.nhs.uk