

What to Expect with Orthognathic Surgery

Orthognathic surgery, also known as corrective jaw surgery, is a surgical procedure used to correct abnormalities of the jaw bones and facial structure that affect chewing, speaking, breathing, and overall facial appearance. It is often performed to realign the jaws and teeth when orthodontic treatment alone cannot achieve proper alignment. Common reasons for orthognathic surgery include correcting severe overbites, underbites, open bites, facial asymmetry, or jaw misalignment caused by injury or congenital conditions. In addition to improving function and oral health, orthognathic surgery can enhance facial aesthetics and boost patient confidence.

Preparing for Orthognathic Surgery:

- **Insurance Coverage Verification:** It is your responsibility to verify that your medical plan includes benefits for orthognathic (jaw) surgery. Dr. Dobbs will determine your specific diagnosis codes after your clinical evaluation; however, examples of diagnosis codes you may be asked about include **M26.01** and **M26.03**, and examples of potential surgical billing codes include **CPT 21196** and **CPT 21245**. Please be aware that authorization or approval from your insurance company does **not** guarantee payment or coverage. All claims are processed according to the terms of your individual plan, including eligibility requirements, exclusions, limitations, and applicable state mandates. Insurance benefits may also change at annual renewal; for example, a plan that covers orthognathic (jaw) surgery in one year may exclude this coverage in a future year.
- **Orthodontic Treatment & Timing:** Prior to orthognathic surgery, orthodontic treatment is almost always required. In some cases, a patient may be able to bypass orthodontic treatment depending on their specific diagnosis and treatment plan.
- **Pre-Surgical Orthodontics:** Orthodontic preparation before surgery may take as little as **1–2 months** or as long as **12–18 months**, depending on your current orthodontic status and the requirements for orthognathic surgery.
- **Post-Surgical Orthodontics:** Following surgery, an additional **6–9 months** of orthodontic treatment is typically necessary to fine-tune tooth positioning and jaw alignment.

What Steps Must Occur Prior To Orthognathic Surgery:

1. **Consult:** Your first appointment with Dr. Dobbs will be an initial consultation. You will need to **bring with you** all imaging done. Including any Photos, Lateral Ceph, Sleep Study, Pano and/or CBCT Scans. We can also take these in our office if you do not have recent imaging to provide.
 - a. **Most imaging cannot be emailed between providers.** Please request images to be placed on a flash drive or CD and bring them to your appointment.
 - b. **Note:** We do not do sleep studies in our office. Dr. Dobbs will order one if necessary or you may have one ordered by your Primary Care Physician.
2. **Orthodontist and Dr. Dobbs Phone Call:** Dr. Dobbs will call your Orthodontist to discuss a specialized treatment plan for surgery.

3. **Orthodontic Prep:** Complete the first stage of orthodontic work for surgery prep. Your Orthodontist will need to send a letter to Dr. Dobbs indicating patient is surgically ready.
4. **Re-Evaluation:** You will schedule a re-evaluation with Dr. Dobbs to confirm you are ready to begin the surgical process.
5. Our surgery and insurance coordinator will submit a request for **prior authorization** to your insurance company. We typically submit these requests about **three (3) months** before your planned surgery.
Important: Even if your insurance company approves or authorizes the procedure, this **does not guarantee payment**. It is your responsibility to understand your plan's coverage and confirm that orthognathic (jaw) surgery benefits apply. Refer to the **Preparing for Orthognathic Surgery** section for more information about your responsibility with prior authorization and coverage verification.
6. **Schedule:** Schedule both a **surgery date** and a **Records Appointment** with Dr. Dobbs.
7. **Records Appointment:** This appointment will be scheduled one month prior to surgery date. We will take additional imaging (CBCT Scan) and an Intra Oral Scan (IOS) of the mouth and teeth. Dr. Dobbs will begin Virtual Surgery Planning and create custom plates and a splint for your case. We will discuss in detail pre-operative instructions and post-operative care. This will be your last visit prior to surgery, and we recommend taking notes during this appointment.
8. **Surgery:** You will have Orthognathic Surgery with typically one overnight stay, up to 23 hours for observation in the hospital. You will only be released if you are consuming enough calories, off supplemental oxygen, up walking and pain is controlled. If medically necessary, the hospital will obtain authorization for any additional overnight stays.
9. **Hospital/Surgical Center:** Surgery will take place at HCA HealthONE Skyridge, located at 10101 Ridgeway Pkwy, Lone Tree, CO 80124
10. **Post-operative Appointments:** There will be approximately 3-4 visits with Dr. Dobbs in the first 6 weeks following surgery at Saddle Rock Institute, 7380 S Gartrell Road, Aurora, CO 80016

Healing Time off Work/School and Exercise:

- For this type of surgery, we typically recommend planning for about 4-6 weeks of leave. Some patients with desk or office-based jobs/school may be able to return as early as one week after surgery.
- Light activity such as walking is encouraged during the first six weeks after surgery. However, heavy lifting and strenuous exercise should be avoided during this time. After your six-week follow-up visit, you will likely be able to gradually return to more moderate activities. Most patients can resume all normal activities around 10-12 weeks after surgery.

Diet Restrictions:

- **Surgery day - 6 weeks post-surgery: NO CHEW DIET for 6 weeks!** No chewing or load on teeth.
- **Week 6 - Week 10 post-surgery: SOFT DIET ONLY for 4 weeks.** Which includes eggs, well cooked pasta, soups, pancakes, oatmeal, or any food that you can cut with a cheap plastic fork.
- **Week 10 - Week 12: PAIN FREE DIET.** Eating foods that are comfortable for you to chew as you work back to your normal diet.

Next Steps: _____
