

What is a bone graft?

If your cleft affects the alveolus (the bone in your gum where your teeth sit), you will probably need surgery to fill the gap in your gum so that your adult teeth can come through properly.

A 'bone graft' involves borrowing a bit of bone from one part of the body (usually from the hip, or sometimes from the shin bone) to help repair another.

Tips from young people in the CYPC:

Take some headphones to help you sleep or listen to your favourite playlist to help you relax.

Take a cuddly toy or something else that will help to comfort you if you feel nervous or upset.

The gas (anaesthetic) you will be given will mean you have a long sleep and won't feel anything while the surgery is happening.

Don't worry about the operation, think about your next dinner! Let the doctors worry about your parents and how they are too.

Try not to think about the operation too much. It will make you worry more and not concentrate on your work or school.

It's normal to feel a bit nervous and worried but try not to overthink what surgery might be like as that will make things worse.

After the surgery, you will be advised to stick to a soft food diet, which isn't as bad as it sounds! Ice cream is definitely the best medicine and it's great for soothing your mouth if it's sore after the surgery.

Things like soups, mashed potato, yogurts, and smoothies are good as you don't have to chew them and there are no sharp edges to worry about. Using plastic cutlery and cups is also a good idea as it doesn't hurt as much if you do accidentally hit the sore area in your mouth.

