

Maxillofacial Trauma

Maxillofacial trauma is any injury to the face or jaws. Facial trauma may present with skin lacerations, burns, obstruction to the nasal cavity or sinuses, damage to the orbital (eye) sockets, fracture to the jawbone, and missing or broken teeth. The most common causes are sports, accidents (automobile and workplace), penetrating injuries, and unfortunately violence. Symptoms may include pain, swelling, bleeding, bruising, and numbness, while fractures to the facial bones may also result in disturbance of bite, difficulty breathing, speaking or seeing. In severe cases maxillofacial trauma may also involve serious or life-threatening symptoms, such as brain injury, airway obstruction, excessive bleeding, or even shock.

Treatment for maxillofacial trauma varies depending upon the type and severity of the injury. Treatment will include a careful and systematic evaluation of structure and systems, including a comprehensive physical exam and x-rays. In some cases, diagnosis and treatment must be deferred until swelling subsides or until more severe injuries are resolved.

Some of the most common fractures of the jaw bones and relevant questions regarding their treatment are listed below:

- Fractures of the Cheekbone (Zygoma)
- Fractures of the Lower Jaw (Mandible)
- Fractures of the Upper Jaw (Maxilla)
- Nasal Fracture