

ITP, the dentist and oral surgeon



Dutch ITP Patients' Association

The Dutch ITP Patients' Association (ITP Patiëntenvereniging Nederland) was founded in May 2003. Every year, a number of information sessions are organised to explain medical developments and give patients the opportunity to exchange experiences with each other. The association also publishes a newsletter 3 times a year. For more information and other brochures, please visit our website www.itp-pv.nl. Our website also provides details of how to support our association.



Patiëntenvereniging
Nederland



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Periodontal procedures		
Removing tartar and smoothing the roots	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Periodontal surgery	50 or higher	Yes (10 days)
Prosthetics		
Placing removable dentures or a prosthesis to keep space between molar/teeth open	No minimum required	No
Orthodontics		
Non-invasive orthodontic procedures	No minimum required	No
Procedures with gum manipulation	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Orthodontic surgery	50 or higher	Yes (10 days)
Anaesthetics		
Local anaesthetics or mandibular block	30 or higher	Yes (5 days)



What if you do have bleeding issues in your mouth after the appointment or procedure?

You may suffer from bleeding in your mouth after the appointment or procedure. This is often only minor and will end by itself. You can try to stop it by pushing a cotton pad or gauze against the bleeding spot for 10 minutes. You may crumble tranexamic acid pills onto the cotton pad or gauze before placing it in your mouth. This ensures that the scab adheres better.

If the bleeding does not stop or is not minor, you should call the dentist or haematologist. You can always consult them if you are concerned.



Take good care of your mouth and teeth

ITP patients may suffer from bleeding gums, for example, when brushing their teeth. Do not stop brushing your teeth or flossing. Good dental hygiene avoids your gums from getting infected.

The above measures ensure that ITP patients can visit the dentist safely. Visiting the dentist regularly keeps your teeth healthy, avoiding greater problems in the future.

Additional information for the haematologist or dentist

A guideline was published with detailed information for the haematologist and dentist in 2021. This guideline also contains options for improving the platelet count before a procedure. You can inform your specialist of this for more information. The article can be found here:

- Van Dijk W E M, Van Es R J, Correa M E, Schutgens R E G, Van Galen K P M. Dentoalveolar procedures in immune thrombocytopenia; systematic review and institutional guidelines. TH Open 2021. doi: 10.1055/a-1641-7770 <https://www.thieme-connect.com/products/ejournals/pdf/10.1055/a-1641-7770.pdf>

Substantiation of the brochure

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Patiëntenvereniging
Nederland

Virtually all procedures at the dentist, dental hygienist, and oral surgeon involve a risk of bleeding if you suffer from ITP. Fortunately, a dental procedure is safe if you have ITP if the right precautions are taken into account. This brochure sets out what ITP patients can keep in mind to prevent bleeding during or after a procedure.

General

What should I keep in mind?

'Visiting the dentist' can mean a variety of things: sometimes you will just undergo a check-up, sometimes you will have a molar extracted or need to undergo a root canal treatment. You may also visit a dental hygienist or oral surgeon. It is important to know that some procedures involve a risk of bleeding, while other procedures are not a problem. This depends on the type of procedure and the number of platelets. A procedure at a dentist, dental hygienist, or oral surgeon may sometimes require additional measures to increase the platelet count. So this is not always needed.



Can I visit my own dentist?

In principle, you can simply visit your own dentist or dental hygienist. It is important to discuss the fact that you have ITP with the dentist. Together, you can determine how the procedure can be performed safely. You and/or the dentist can also contact the haematologist for advice.

What is the difference between a dental hygienist, a dentist, and an oral surgeon?

Dental hygienist

The dental hygienist helps with oral care, for example, by giving advice and cleaning your teeth. Many procedures at the dental hygienist can take place without additional precautions if you suffer from ITP, but additional measures may sometimes be needed.

Dentist

The dentist performs numerous procedures, for example, checking your teeth, filling cavities, extracting molars, or performing a root canal treatment. A regular check-up does not require additional precautions if you suffer from ITP. However, other procedures often require additional measures.

Oral surgeon

The oral surgeon often conducts larger procedures than a dentist, for example, the removal of wisdom teeth. There is a good chance that additional measures will be needed in such cases.

Default measures

We recommend these measures to all ITP patients undergoing a procedure at the dentist, dental hygienist, or oral surgeon.

Analgesia

You can take paracetamol (acetaminophen) for pain complaints. If paracetamol is not effective enough, your general practitioner or haematologist can give you advice about stronger painkillers, such as celecoxib. Stronger painkillers require a prescription.

Ibuprofen, diclofenac, and naproxen (also sold as Advil, Voltaren, and Aleve) should be avoided. These products are not suitable if your platelet count is low (below 50 ($\text{10}^9/\text{L}$)). This is because they inhibit the effectiveness of the platelets.

Properly closing the wound

It is important that the dentist or oral surgeon pays additional attention to properly closing wounds in your mouth after the procedure. Properly closing the wounds helps avoid bleeding after the procedure.

Additional measures

Increasing the platelet count

For some procedures, the platelet count must be above a certain threshold, for example, above 30 or 50 ($\text{10}^9/\text{L}$). The table shows for which procedures this is the case. Make sure to also check whether local anaesthesia is required. A procedure may require a different platelet count than local anaesthesia. In this case, observe the highest recommended count. We recommend discussing the table with your dentist.

We have established that the platelet count must be above a certain threshold for some procedures. In this case, check your platelet count two weeks before the procedure. Consult the haematologist if your platelet count is too low.

The platelet count is not all that matters. Some ITP patients have more or less bleeding issues than other patients. If you are not certain, you should consult the haematologist.

Tranexamic acid (brand name: Cyclokapron)

For some procedures, we recommend taking tranexamic acid if your platelet count is lower than 50 ($\text{10}^9/\text{L}$). This drug helps to stop blood clots from breaking down in mucous membranes. The table shows whether this is necessary and for how long. Usually, you will need to take two or three pills, three times a day. The haematologist can prescribe this drug. You will start in the morning on the day of the dentist appointment. You will continue to take medication every day for 5, 7, or 10 days following the dentist appointment.

Dental procedure	Required platelet count ($\text{10}^9/\text{L}$)	Tranexamic acid required (for how long) Only if platelet count is <50 ($\text{10}^9/\text{L}$)
Check-up		
Regular check-up	No minimum required	No
Cleaning teeth		
Without tartar removal	No minimum required	Yes (5 days)
With tartar removal	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Extracting molar		
Very simple procedure (one molar with a single root)	No minimum required	Yes (5 days)
Simple procedure	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Difficult procedure or >3 roots	50 or higher	Yes (10 days)
Filling dentures		
Simple procedure with little gum manipulation	No minimum required	Yes (5 days)
Procedure with gum manipulation	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Placing crown and bridges		
Simple procedure with little gum manipulation	No minimum required	Yes (5 days)
Procedure with gum manipulation, removing cement residue	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Implants		
Regular implants	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Mandibular procedures	50 or higher	Yes: 10 days
Root or root canal procedures		
Instruments not past the apical constriction (root tip)	No minimum required	Yes (5 days)
Pulpotomy or instruments past the apical constriction (root tip)	30 or higher	Yes (7 days)
Apical surgery	50 or higher	Yes (10 days)