



MANDIBULAR
FRACTURE
COMPLICATIONS

DECISION
TREE

IMMEDIATE?

Clinical Situation		Recommended Action
Threatened airway?	➔	Secure the airway without delay
Significant bleeding/expanding hematoma?	➔	Control and monitor clinical impact
Tooth/fragment loss with obstruction risk?	➔	Suction/clear and remove visible foreign bodies when safe
Gross instability preventing safe care?	➔	Provisional stabilization before definitive repair

INTERMEDIATE?

Clinical Situation		Recommended Action
Occlusion changed since the immediate postoperative period?	➔	Treat as malreduction/instability → consider early revision
Fixation incompatible with or failing for the pattern (especially comminution)?	➔	Switch to a more rigid, pattern-appropriate strategy (bridge when indicated)
Relevant comminution?	➔	Treat using load-bearing fixation

WHAT TYPE OF
COMPLICATION?

LATE?

Clinical Situation		Recommended Action
Established malocclusion (malunion) with functional impact?	➔	Surgical correction (osteotomy/revision)
Delayed union?	➔	Revision to restore reduction + revise osteosynthesis
Nonunion?	➔	Remove existing hardware + debride the pseudarthrosis + load-bearing fixation + autogenous bone grafting
Infection?	➔	Debride the focus + appropriate fixation; remove loose hardware + autogenous bone grafting when indicated
TMJ ankylosis?	➔	Arthroplasty or prosthetic joint replacement