



Wisdom Teeth

The removal of wisdom teeth is one of the most common surgical procedures carried out in the UK.

Wisdom teeth usually grow through the gums during the late teens early twenties. These are the last teeth to come through and in most cases there isn't always enough room in the mouth for them to grow properly. Due to the lack of space the wisdom teeth can erupt at an angle or only partly erupt. Wisdom teeth that grow like this are known as impacted.

Sometimes wisdom teeth that are impacted and haven't fully broken through the gum can cause problems. Food and bacteria can get trapped around the edge of the wisdom teeth causing a build-up of plaque which can lead to:

- Tooth Decay
- Gum Disease
- Pericoronitis – When plaque causes an infection of soft tissue that surrounds the tooth.
- Abscess – A collection of pus in your wisdom teeth or surrounding tissue as a result of a bacterial infection.

Many of these problems can be treated with antibiotics and antiseptic mouthwash and this is usually what your dentist will suggest trying first before recommending extraction.

Wisdom teeth Removal

Before the procedure the process will be explained to you and once you are fully informed you will be asked to sign a consent form.

You will be given a local anaesthetic injection to numb the area around the tooth. You may also be given a sedative to help you relax during the procedure. This is something that you will have discussed at a separate appointment prior to your treatment.

General anaesthetic is rarely used for wisdom tooth removal but in some cases is used. This is always carried out in a hospital setting.

You will still feel pressure during the procedure, this is normal and is just the movement of the tooth as it is loosened from the socket.

You shouldn't feel pain as your wisdom tooth is removed. If at any point you do, let the dentist know and more local anaesthetic can be given.

Sometimes a small incision in the gum is necessary to help create more space for the tooth to be removed. If an incision is made then dissolvable stitches are used to seal the gum. They don't need to be taken out they should dissolve within a week to 10 days.

The wisdom tooth may also be cut into smaller pieces using a drill during treatment to make it easier to remove. The drill can also be used to remove some bone around the tooth to expose the roots more and make it easier to access them.

The dentist will place some gauze over the site and ask you to bite down on it to create some pressure around the socket. This will allow a blood clot to form in the now empty socket. The blood clot is part of the healing process and it's important to try not to dislodge it.

After Surgery

Sometimes the procedure can leave you with some discomfort it is usually worse for the first 3 days after the treatment but can last up to 2 weeks.

You may also have:

- **A stiff sore jaw** – this should wear off within 7-10 days
- **Pain** – Regular pain relief can help manage pain
- **A swollen mouth and cheeks** – applying a cold compress to the area can help reduce swelling.
- **Some mild bruising of your cheek** – you can be bruised for up to 2 weeks.
- **An unpleasant taste in your mouth.**

As with all surgery there are risks. Risks associated with removing a wisdom tooth include infection or delayed healing both of which are more likely if you smoke during your recovery.

Another possible complication is "Dry Socket". This is a dull ache in your gum or jaw and sometimes can leave a bad taste or smell in your mouth. This is more common if you don't follow the after-care instructions given by your dentist.

For 24 hours after treatment you should avoid:

- **Rinsing your mouth out with liquid**
- **Drinking alcohol**
- **Smoking**
- **Strenuous physical activity**

There is a small chance of nerve damage which can cause a tingling or numb sensation in your tongue, lower lip, chin and gums. This is usually temporary but in rare cases it can be permanent. After treatment if you experience any numbing/tingling please contact the dental practice straight away.

To aid your recovery it can be beneficial to:

- Use painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen (always read manufactures dosage instructions) – there is some evidence to suggest that ibuprofen is the best painkiller to take after having a wisdom tooth removed.
- Use an extra pillow to help support your head at night
- Eat soft foods for the next few days and let any hot liquids cool down before consumption
- Gently rinse the extraction site with warm salt water – 1 tea spoon in a glass of warm water or antiseptic mouth wash after 24 hours for the next few days after food.

It is important that all these instructions are followed. Here is our contact details if you have any concerns.

Oral surgery office: 0161 302 1584

Main reception: 0161 962 7465

Out of hours: 0161 337 2246

