



Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE)

Patient Advice Sheet Wisdom Tooth Problems

Version 2.0

Date approved: November 2018

Approved by: The Board

Review due: November 2020

Policy will be updated as required in response to a change in national policy or evidence-based guideline.

Wisdom Teeth

Wisdom teeth (third molars) are the last teeth to erupt in the mouth. Frequently, soft tissue, bone, adjacent teeth or some pathological (disease) process blocks their eruption. Because of these factors wisdom teeth get impacted (lie in an abnormal position).

Remember: many people do not have wisdom teeth, while in others wisdom teeth may get impacted, decay or cause other problems, thereby requiring removal. Wisdom teeth are not required for normal jaw function and their absence does not affect facial aesthetics. This is precisely the reason that following their removal, (unlike all other teeth) wisdom teeth do not need any replacement by artificial means.

Why are wisdom teeth removed?

Wisdom teeth may need to be removed if causing persistent / recurrent problems for e.g., gum swelling or nerve pain due to extensive tooth decay

How are wisdom teeth removed?

Generally, the procedure involves raising the gum flap covering the wisdom tooth, removing some bone covering it with or without division of the wisdom tooth. This is followed by removal of the tooth and stitching the gum flap with resorbable sutures. However, each case is different and you need to discuss it with your oral surgeon

Is the procedure painful?

The extraction itself is pain-free. However, there is some discomfort during administration of local anaesthetic injection. After the injection, all that you will feel is a pressure sensation and the vibration caused by the drill when it is used.

The local anaesthetic wears off in up to 2 hours from the time of administration, and after this there will be some discomfort for which a painkiller will be required.

How long does the operation take?

The operation time varies from 15 - 45 minutes depending on the number of teeth to be removed and the difficulty of the procedure.

What I will experience after having my wisdom teeth removed?

After the procedure you may have some swelling, discomfort, stiffness of the jaw and bruising. These usually settle down within a week. You will need regular painkillers for 5-7 days and may be prescribed antibiotics, which should help to ease off these problems. Rarely, complications can occur, such as delayed healing of the tooth socket or nerve injury.

How should I look after my mouth after removal of my wisdom teeth?

You shall be given a post-extraction information leaflet explaining the care of the extraction wound.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries

Peninsula Dental School Dental Education Facility
0900 - 1600 Hours

Tel: 0345 155 8109