

Information on Surgical Removal of Wisdom Teeth

Minor Oral Surgery Service



Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust: delivering excellence
in dental care across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Suffolk

This information leaflet is given to all patients having wisdom teeth removed under local anaesthesia at Dental HealthCare Cambridgeshire.

You must clearly understand the whole text and if you have any queries, please ask your Oral/Dental Surgeon on the day of your first visit.

Simple surgical procedures can be carried out on the same day of consultation as long as you clearly understand the procedure and the risks and benefits.

Complicated surgical procedures may be carried out at a further appointment or referred to hospital if needed.

All treatments carried out at Dental HealthCare Cambridgeshire will be under local anaesthesia. It is also important to send back the medical questionnaire enclosed or inform us of any change in your current medical conditions or medications at the initial appointment.

Wisdom Teeth

The wisdom teeth (or the third molars) are usually the last teeth to erupt into the mouth anytime after 16 years. Frequently there is not enough room in the mouth to accommodate the erupting wisdom teeth. They normally erupt between the age of 16 and 24. If there is not enough space to accommodate the erupting wisdom teeth, they become impacted.

Asymptomatic wisdom teeth are best left alone. Fully erupted wisdom teeth seldom cause problems.

Partially erupted wisdom teeth may cause repeated infections around that region. It can also lead to food accumulation around the teeth. This food packing can occasionally cause decay to the teeth in front (2nd molar tooth). Sometimes cysts can grow around the crowns of unerupted wisdom teeth. The guidance from NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) on the following is the indication for wisdom teeth removal.

Benefits

To prevent any problems associated with the wisdom teeth.

Oral Surgeon

The procedure will be performed either by a Specialist Oral Surgeon or suitably qualified experienced surgeon.

Procedure

Your tooth/teeth will be anaesthetised using a local anaesthetic before the procedure. An incision on the gum may be required to see the tooth. It is also sometimes necessary to remove some bone around the tooth along with division of the tooth crown and roots into pieces. Once the tooth has been removed, the gum needs to be stitched back with dissolving Sutures.

Risks

Routine postoperative symptoms like pain, bleeding, swelling, stiffness etc are expected. Depending on the complexity of the procedure, some patients even have difficulty in swallowing and have bruising around that region.

The pain, swelling and stiffness may last for at least a week. You are advised to take regular analgesia and anti-inflammatory tablets.

Normally the bleeding from the surgical site stops before you are discharged. If you have bleeding later, you are advised to bite onto the gauze given to you or any clean cotton swabs or handkerchief for at least 10 minutes.

A **dry socket** is common with lower wisdom teeth removal, where the clot is dislodged exposing the bone. The socket needs to be cleaned and a dressing (alvogel) needs to be placed by the surgeon.

The most important (rare) risks involved with the surgical removal of lower wisdom teeth:

1. **Damage to the nerve** which supplies sensation to your lower lip on the affected side, chin and the lower anterior teeth resulting in **numb lip and chin**. Sometimes you may have increased sensitivity or burning sensation instead of numbness

2. **Damage to the nerve** which supplies sensation to tongue resulting in numb tongue. The chances of nerve damage are very rare.

There is a **2-7% chance** of temporary damage to the lip nerve. The chances of permanent damage to this nerve are less than **0.9% to 1%** and the tongue nerve is **0.05%**. About 1 in 10 people will have a tingling sensation which will last for several weeks and **1 in 100** may have this lasting for up to one year.

These risks will be higher with difficult surgical extractions.

The most important risks involved with the surgical removal of upper wisdom teeth:

The upper wisdom teeth are often less difficult and the common complications associated with this are:

1. Fracture of the thin maxillary bone around the tooth
2. Very rarely communication between the mouth and the maxillary sinus (air filled space in the upper jaw)

Your surgeon will explain further if this happens.

Ref: NICE, British Association of Oral Surgeons

To book an appointment in Cambridgeshire / Huntingdon / Wisbech / Suffolk / Norfolk, please contact:

0300 555 6667 (Option 3 – Minor Oral Surgery).

We provide this service in the following locations:

- Cambridge
- Bury St Edmunds
- Huntingdon
- King's Lynn
- Newmarket
- Peterborough
- Wisbech

COVID-19

If you, or any member of your household, currently have COVID-19, or have been asked to isolate due to contact with someone who has COVID-19, please mention this when you call to book an appointment so that suitable adjustments can be made for your treatment.

For further information about this service contact:

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Find us online at www.dentalhealthcareeoe.nhs.uk



If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

To find out how we use what we know about you (Privacy Notice) or how to access our buildings (AccessAble), please visit www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk and follow the links or please contact us.



If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net.

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.