

WHEN IT'S "WISE" TO REMOVE

WISDOM TEETH

NOW

PAST



FUTURE



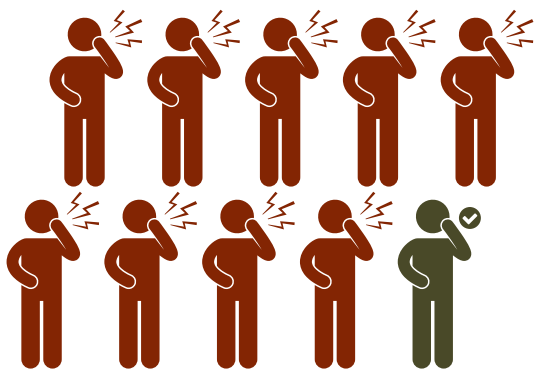
THE
Maxillofacial
Surgery CENTER

Wisdom Teeth

There are many milestones in the journey from childhood to becoming an adult. But one of the more physically defining moments of adulthood is when you get your first wisdom tooth.

Generally this happens somewhere in the mid-teens. **Most people will get 4 wisdom teeth between the ages of 17 and 25** – during those painful, yet exciting years when you start taking on adult responsibilities and, hopefully, are gaining a little wisdom.

For some, these “third molars” grow quite normally without the presence of cavities or disease and all they require is regular cleaning and dental check-ups. But, for a majority of the population wisdom teeth do not have the space to grow normally. They are unable to fully break through the gums and may grow in unusual positions – that’s what the dentist means when he says they are impacted.



9 out of 10 adults will have at least one impacted wisdom tooth.

Why An Impacted Wisdom Tooth Can Be A Serious Problem.

Partially grown or erupted wisdom teeth cause problems because they are hard to clean. Unremoved food particles are the perfect environment for the growth of bacteria.

This bacterial growth can lead to a variety of problems:

- ➔ Infection
- ➔ Tooth decay
- ➔ Periodontal disease
- ➔ Bone loss
- ➔ Tooth loss
- ➔ Damage to surround teeth and gums



When Should Wisdom Teeth Be Removed?

Removing wisdom teeth while they and you are still young is the best course of action. **Why?**

There are **3** reasons:



Young adult wisdom teeth have incomplete root systems.



Surgery is less complicated.



The healing process is quicker.

This is definitely one of those times when an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

There is a “window of opportunity” while the teeth are new and the root systems not fully developed when the teeth are easiest to remove and will have the fewest complications. **The longer you wait, the greater the risks of complications.** We recommend an evaluation at age 16 to check on root development and the likelihood of impaction.

If impaction is indicated, then removal should be done at $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ development of the root system.

When the surgery is done as a young adult, it is usually accomplished quickly and with **minimum pain and swelling after surgery.** Young bodies heal fast and have strong immune systems.

Top Tips That Make Wisdom Tooth Surgery A Walk In The Park!

BEFORE SURGERY:



Schedule a time you can take a few days to relax and eat way too much pudding & popsicles!



Stock the fridge with liquids & favorite soft foods from mash potatoes to yogurt and pudding.



Plan to do something you haven't had time to complete while in bed: a hobby, read a book, start a blog, write an actual handwritten letter to your grandma and grandpa.



Fill any prescriptions the doctor gave you to use after the surgery so on the day of surgery you can go straight home and not drool on the pharmacy counter.



Take an anti-inflammatory before the surgery to have less soreness after.



Arrange for a ride, DO NOT drive yourself.

More Tips!

AFTER SURGERY:



Be careful what you eat – start with just a liquid diet and gradually add in soft foods. **No spicy or hot food and for goodness sakes NO STRAWS!**



Rest – right after surgery relax and keep you head elevated with pillows. Limit eating, drinking and talking **for the first two hours following surgery**, and plan to rest for the remainder of the day.



Wait a few days before you do any strenuous exercise.



Rinse with salt water – rinse you mouth several times a day with a mixture of warm water and salt to help reduce pain and swelling.



Control any bleeding – stop any bleeding by biting down gently on gauze. 12 hours after surgery you can substitute a damp tea bag for the gauze, which encourages clotting.



Apply ice packs to the outside of your mouth intermittently (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off) for up to two days to minimize swelling or any discomfort. *[If your tooth was infected prior to removal, your dentist may ask you to use warm, moist compresses rather than ice.]*



No smoking or spitting excessively on the day of the surgery or as long as there is bleeding.

Now that you're a little wiser, let's chat!

SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT



(480) 279-5949 | team@surgerycenteraz.com



Sources:

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