



Alternatives to Wisdom Teeth Extraction

For your dental health.

What are your choices for treating wisdom teeth?

When you're thinking about how to deal with your wisdom teeth, you have two options:

- Keep them
- Remove them

A few lucky people are able to keep their wisdom teeth, use them, and take proper care of them. In most cases, though, keeping wisdom teeth isn't possible, and wisdom teeth have to be removed. In these cases, delaying removal can cause serious problems.

Why remove wisdom teeth?

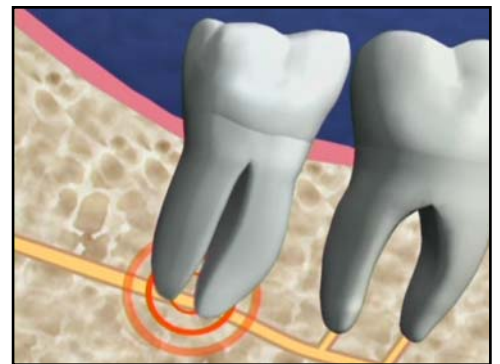
An impacted wisdom tooth is one that hasn't come in or has come in only partially. Sometimes an impacted wisdom tooth can become infected. This can be excruciatingly painful. This is a common dental emergency and can cause pain for days, even after antibiotics are started, and can even be life threatening.

An impacted wisdom tooth may push on other teeth. A misaligned wisdom tooth can also cause cavities in the tooth next to it because the area where they touch can't be kept free of bacteria and plaque.

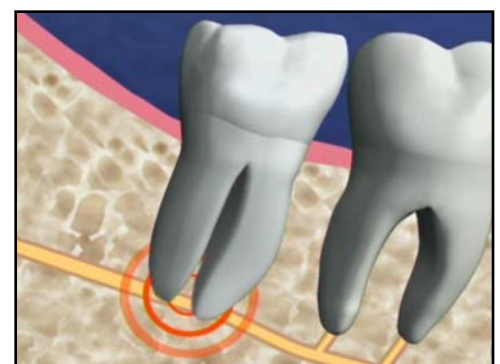
Wisdom teeth are nearly impossible to keep free of plaque, even when the rest of the teeth are completely free of plaque. In addition to cavities, plaque also causes periodontal disease, which may start near the wisdom teeth and spread throughout the mouth.

Sometimes cysts form around impacted wisdom teeth, and cysts can destroy a tremendous amount of bone before they're noticed and sometimes require surgery to repair.

With time, the roots of wisdom teeth may grow around a nerve in the jaw, which can then be damaged during extraction. This could leave your lip and chin permanently numb.



Impacted wisdom tooth



Roots growing into nerve

Choosing removal

Because of these many serious problems, it's usually better to remove wisdom teeth early, even before they break through the gums.