

Tooth Talk

“Hey Doc, my wisdom teeth are not hurting me. Do I still need to get them removed?”

Most people have 4 wisdom teeth and they are usually the last teeth to appear in one's mouth around the age of 16 to 20. Due to the modern day diet being more refined and less abrasive than our ancestor's, there is less generalized wear on the tooth structure. As a result, in most instances, there is a lack of room for the wisdom teeth to come in completely through the jaw bone and the gum.

The tendency for wisdom teeth to become “impacted”, not being able to erupt into their proper position, is the cause of most problems.

Impacted wisdom teeth can grow in any direction, such as horizontally, sideways, or at an angle. Problems with impacted wisdom teeth include:

- **Infected gum** - When an impacted wisdom tooth only breaks through the gum tissue partially, there exists a space between the wisdom tooth and the overlying gum tissue which allows bacteria to grow inside and cause gum infection.
- **Decay** - Because impacted wisdom teeth are not through the bone and the gum completely, it is almost impossible to keep them clean. Therefore, bacteria in the plaque can form cavities on the surfaces of the wisdom teeth, causing pain and nerve infection.
- **Structural damage to the adjacent teeth**- Impacted wisdom teeth can continue to grow along their abnormal paths and push on the adjacent teeth, causing destruction on the root surfaces of the adjacent teeth. Ultimately, one may lose both the wisdom tooth and the adjacent tooth due to pain/ swelling/ infection.
- **Crowding**- Some believe that the pressure from the erupting wisdom teeth on the rest of the teeth, particularly in the lower jaw, can cause crowding of the front teeth. Crowded front teeth lead to unsightly smile and more difficulty with performing proper oral hygiene.
- **Cyst formation** - The sac that surrounds an impacted wisdom tooth can fill with fluid and form a cyst which can potentially cause damage to the adjacent tooth, the jaw bone and nerves.

Problems with impacted wisdom teeth can develop gradually and, therefore, symptoms may not be present. One way to detect potential wisdom teeth problems is the use of x-rays to image the positions of the wisdom teeth during regular dental visits.

In summary, if it has been discovered that there is a lack of room for the wisdom teeth to come in completely through the jaw bone and the gum tissue, it is wise to consider having them removed sooner rather than later, even though there may not be any pain/swelling/discomfort associated with the impacted wisdom teeth at the time.



ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

SCAN THE CODE BELOW TO
VIEW OUR MOBILE SITE



OR VISIT WWW.DRVICTORSUN.COM
OR VISIT PHONE FOR OUR
PROCEDURE LIST, SMILE GALLERY
AND MORE!



4 Russell St. E., Lindsay
www.drVictorsun.com
705 324-0050