

Removing Teeth

DT03 Lite - Expires end of January 2026



This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

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Why do I need to have a tooth removed?

You may need a tooth removed for one or more of the following reasons.

- Tooth decay
- Periodontal (gum) disease
- Trauma
- Dental abscess
- Failed root-canal treatment
- Severe pain
- Over-eruption – A tooth can grow out too far and damage the cheek or gum
- Orthodontic (teeth and jaw) treatment
- Treatment planning
- Medical reasons

Are there any alternatives to removing a tooth?

Simple painkillers such as paracetamol can help control mild pain and antibiotics can help with infection.

Sometimes root-canal treatment will help to treat infection and pain.

Depending on how damaged your tooth is, your dentist may be able to rebuild it with a filling or crown.

What will happen if I decide not to have the operation or the operation is delayed?

Your symptoms may get worse or return. There is a risk of getting a serious, life-threatening infection.

If you need to have your tooth removed before you can have other dental or orthodontic treatment, the treatment may not be possible or the chance of the treatment being a success may be reduced.

If you have increased pain, contact your dentist.

What does the procedure involve?

Most teeth are removed under a local anaesthetic that is injected around your tooth to numb it. The procedure can take up to 40 minutes.

Your dentist will loosen and remove your tooth with instruments called elevators and forceps. Most teeth can be loosened and removed in less than a minute. However, sometimes removing a tooth can involve cutting the gum to uncover your tooth, removing bone around your tooth and dividing your tooth with a drill.

What complications can happen?

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Swelling and bruising
- Infection
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- Dry socket
- Retained roots, where it is not possible to remove the whole tooth
- Damage to nearby teeth
- Broken jaw
- Not being able to open your mouth fully (trismus) and jaw stiffness
- Sinus problems
- Damage to nerves
- Osteonecrosis, a rare condition where tissue in your jawbone starts to die

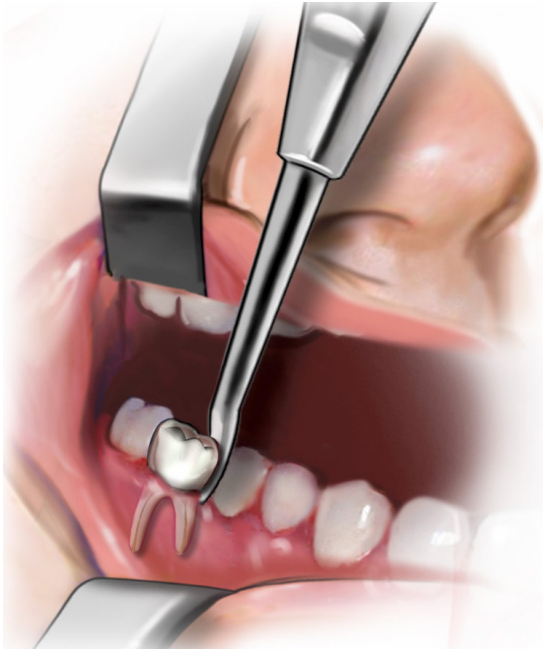
How soon will I recover?

To reduce the risk of bleeding, swelling and bruising, do not exercise, drink alcohol or have a hot bath for 24 hours.

Depending on the difficulty of the procedure and the risk of infection, you may be given antibiotics.

Try to leave your wound alone for 1 to 2 days. Then rinse your mouth gently with hot, salty water after meals for the next 2 days.

You should be able to return to normal activities within a week.



An elevator is used to loosen the tooth



Forceps are used to remove the tooth

Most people make a full recovery.

Summary

Teeth can sometimes cause serious problems.

Removing a tooth is usually a safe and effective way to prevent your symptoms from coming back.

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

Acknowledgements

Reviewer

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Illustrator

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