

# Removing Impacted Upper Canine Teeth (child and adolescent)

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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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## What are canine teeth?

Canine teeth are the large, pointed teeth in the four front corners of the mouth.

Your child may need to have an upper canine tooth removed for one or more of the following reasons.

- An orthodontist (specialist in the development and position of teeth and jaws) may need to make space to move other teeth backwards.
- Your child may have a cyst near or around their tooth.
- The tooth may not have come through fully (partly erupted).
- The tooth may not have come through at all and is stuck (or impacted) against nearby teeth or bone, causing a bulge in the gum or the roof of the mouth.
- The tooth may be damaging other teeth or causing them to move.
- Your dentist may want to put an implant in a gap that the impacted tooth is blocking.

## Are there any alternatives to removing an upper canine tooth?

In some cases a special bracket can be put on the canine tooth to allow it to be pulled into a better position with braces.

## What does the procedure involve?

Most canine teeth are removed under a local anaesthetic that is injected around your child's tooth to numb it.

If your dentist or surgeon thinks the procedure may be complicated, they may use an alternative to a local anaesthetic.

The procedure usually takes 10 to 60 minutes, depending on whether one or both upper canine teeth need to be removed and how difficult they are to remove.

Your dentist or surgeon will cut the gum to uncover your child's tooth.

Your dentist or surgeon will loosen and remove your child's tooth with instruments called elevators and forceps.

In some cases your dentist or surgeon may need to remove some bone around the tooth, or split the tooth with a drill.

Your dentist or surgeon may need to close the gum with stitches.

- Bleeding after the procedure
- Swelling and bruising
- Infection
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- Retained roots
- Damage to nearby teeth
- Sinus problems
- Damage to nerves that connect to your child's gum

## Consequences of this procedure

- Pain

## How soon will my child recover?

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

Your child must leave their wound alone for 1 to 2 days. Then for the next 2 days they must rinse their mouth gently with boiled, warm, salty water after meals.

Your child may need to have up to a week off school, especially if they had a general anaesthetic. They should be able to return to normal activities within a week.

Your dentist may arrange for your child to come back to the clinic after a week to remove any stitches or for a check-up. Most children make a full recovery.

## Summary

Upper canine teeth can sometimes cause problems.

Removing an upper canine tooth is usually a safe and effective way to prevent your child's 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**

### **Reviewers**

Andrew Sidebottom (BDS, FDSRCS, MBChB, FRCS)

Timothy Probert (BDSc(Melb), MDSc(Melb), FRACDS(OMS), MBA)