

WISDOM TEETH 101

Get the information you need to avoid wisdom teeth related issues.

Wisdom teeth are the upper and lower third molars, located at the very back of the mouth. When wisdom teeth are healthy and in the right position, they usually don't cause problems. But when they are impacted and don't have enough room to emerge fully or normally, problems can occur. The information below will help you know the signs and understand what to expect if your wisdom teeth become impacted.

Symptoms*

If your wisdom teeth are causing problems, you may have symptoms such as:

- Pain or jaw stiffness near an impacted tooth
- Pain or irritation from a tooth coming in at an awkward angle and rubbing against your cheek, tongue or top or bottom of your mouth
- An infected swelling in the flap of gum tissue that has formed on top of an impacted tooth that has broken partway through the gum
- Crowding of other teeth
- Tooth decay or gum disease, if there isn't enough room to properly clean your wisdom tooth and nearby teeth

Prevention**

You can't prevent your wisdom teeth from becoming impacted. But with regular dental cleanings, checkups and x-rays, your dentist can keep a close eye on the

growth of your wisdom teeth to identify any issues before serious symptoms develop.

Treatment*

If your wisdom teeth are causing problems or are likely to in the future, your dentist may recommend that you have them removed, or extracted. This can be done by a general dentist or an oral surgeon.

It is important to talk to your dentist/oral surgeon about wisdom tooth removal procedures and any recommended preparation and/or home care instructions.

To help ease anxiety during surgery:

- Listen to music or watch a video
- Bring a supportive family member or friend
- Practice relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing and imagery

Together, all the way.®



*Wisdom Tooth Problems. Healthwise. May 2017. <<https://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness/hw/medical-topics/wisdom-tooth-problems-hw172025>>

** Impacted Wisdom Teeth. Mayo Clinic. March 2018. <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/wisdom-teeth/basics/definition/con-20026676>

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