



Oxfordshire Community Dental Service

Removal of teeth

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How are teeth removed?

Teeth can be removed under local anaesthetic, with or without sedation, or under general anaesthetic.

If you are having our tooth removed under local anaesthetic, with or without sedation, the dentist will use injections to numb both the tooth and the nearby gums.

The area where you received the injection will remain numb for several hours, or possibly even longer, because of the local anaesthetic.

This ensures that you won't feel any pain during the extraction, though you will still feel pushing and pressure sensations.

It is normal to hear some cracking noises as the tooth is removed.

Some teeth are very simple to remove and may take only a few minutes (simple extraction) others can be more complex and may take longer.

For more complicated teeth, a small incision may be made in the gum to expose more of the tooth.

A dental drill is sometimes used to take away bone around the tooth and help loosen it from the jaw.

The tooth might be divided into smaller sections to make it easier to remove. After the extraction, the gum is closed using dissolvable stitches.

What are the alternatives?

The alternative to surgery is to leave the tooth/teeth in place with no treatment.

However, a decayed tooth can cause:

- ❗ Toothache
- ❗ Repeated infection around the tooth which causes swelling and pain.

What are the expected benefits of treatment?

- ✅ Relief and prevention of pain and infection.

What are the potential risks and side effects?

Pain and discomfort: It is common to feel discomfort and swelling after tooth removal. This is usually worse for the first three days and it may take up to two weeks before all the soreness goes.

Bleeding: Minor bleeding from the extraction site is common. The risk of prolonged is increased for patients with bleeding

disorders, high blood pressure or taking blood thinning medication.

Infection: This may develop after an extraction, causing pain, swelling, bad breath or fever.

Lip soreness and bruising: While the tooth is being removed there may be some pressure or stretching of the lip by the surgical instruments, which may cause temporary bruising.

Damage to nearby tooth or filling: Occasionally when a tooth is removed, the tooth or filling next to it may become chipped or loosened.

Dry socket: This occurs when the blood clot at the extraction site dislodges or dissolves, exposing the underlying bone. This most commonly occurs two to five days following extraction.

Delayed healing: Smoking, certain medications and poor oral hygiene can slow the healing process and lead to delayed healing or bone exposure.

Difficulty chewing: If multiple teeth have been removed, chewing may be harder until the mouth adjusts.

Changes in appearance: Teeth provide support for the soft tissues of the lips and cheeks so losing them can affect your smile and change your facial appearance.

Damage to surrounding teeth: There is a possibility of accidental damage to adjacent teeth/fillings during the extraction process.

Nerve injury: Nerves close to the lower back teeth can be bruised / injured, leading to temporary or (rarely) permanent numbness or tingling in the lips, tongue, or chin.

Sinus complications: Upper back teeth can be located close to or in contact with the sinus. Extractions may occasionally result in a small opening, which can lead to discomfort or infection and might require an additional procedure for repair.

Fractured jaw: This is very rare and usually only occurs when removing deeply impacted teeth in patients with weakened bones.

What should I do before I come to my appointment?

Please avoid smoking for at least 72 hours before your tooth removal to reduce the risk of infection and pain.

Please eat normally before your appointment if having your teeth removed under local anaesthetic or sedation.

Please take your tablets and medication as usual, unless advised otherwise.

How will I feel afterwards?

Your mouth will be numb and the numbness may take a few hours to wear off. Please be careful whilst your mouth is numb

as you will be unable to gauge the temperature or texture of food and drinks.

What should I do when I go home?

You will be given aftercare advice and a printed instruction sheet before you go home. It is important that you follow this advice, feel free to ask questions if anything is unclear.

Who should I contact if I need some more help?

- i** The clinic where you had your treatment.
- i** Out-of-hours emergency dental clinic on 111 - evenings and weekends (including bank holidays).
- i** In an emergency, go to your nearest Emergency Department (A&E).

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only.

Accessibility

An accessible version of this leaflet can be found on our website: www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets

If you need the information in another language or format, please contact us.

Get in touch

Address Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Oxfordshire Community Dental Service
Trust Headquarters
Littlemore Mental Health Centre
Sandford Road, Oxford OX4 4XN

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Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

Phone 0800 328 7971

Email PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk