

WISDOM TOOTH

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WISDOM TOOTH

Wisdom tooth is the third molar (last) tooth.

Human being usually have four wisdom teeth, two in upper and two for lower, usually erupt between age 18-25 years old.

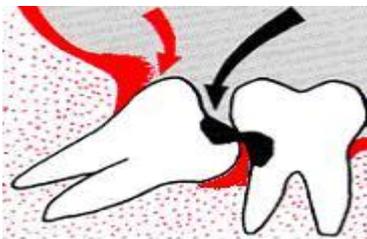
Upper wisdom tooth usually does not cause any problem, However, the lower wisdom tooth usually has not enough space to erupt, and therefore it is impacted/jam or tilted.



Problems of wisdom tooth

- Food impaction causing bad breath
- Gum overlying the tooth swollen; fever.
- Broken the tooth in front and also the bone and gum surrounding it (If the tooth in front is badly broken, tooth in front may be extracted and not the wisdom tooth)
- The tooth in front may decays, sensitive or pain.
- Cheek and neck become swollen, with limited mouth opening.
- The pain may spread to the neck, ear, head and also the adjacent teeth.
- The tooth may also weaken the lower jaw which causes it to break more easily during surgery or suffer force.
- Abnormal growth (cysts etc) and erode the surrounding bone/teeth.

EXTRACT OR LEAVE IT?



If the position of the wisdom tooth is satisfactory, you can consider **removal of the gum** that gets swollen easily around the tooth. However, the gum may grow back and the problem recurs.

If the tooth causing problem repeatedly (such as repeated swelling, food stuck that difficult to clean), it would be better to extract the tooth as soon as possible.

The dentist will explain the advantages and disadvantages of the treatment and obtained consent of the patient. The patient will make the final decision. If the gum is swelling, the antibiotic coverage is needed for 3-5 days before extraction.

THE PROCEDURES OF EXTRACTION

- Injection of local anesthetic.
- Open up the gum, if needed.
- The tooth is divided into two: crown and root.
- If needed, a part of the bone close to the tooth needs to be

grind.

- The wound is closed with stitch(es).

TIME?

The time of surgery/extraction depends on the position of the tooth (whether it is up right, tilted or "sleeping"), and also how deep the tooth is sank. It takes about 30 minutes but in some occasion may last for more than one hour.

SELF CARE AFTER SURGERY

Post-operative instructions will be given to patient verbally and in written after surgery/extraction. It will explain the way of care after surgery /extraction, what to do and what not to do. It will also explain what to expect and others.

Patient is advised to come for review of the wound after one or two days. Patient is also advised to rest at home for at least overnight. If needed, the suture will be opened after 1 week.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Usual complications after extraction : pain, bleeding or infection (attack by bacteria).
- Muscle swelling and limited mouth opening.
- Swelling at the gland adjacent to the throat.
- The corner of the lip may be ulcerated due to friction of the glove of the doctor.
- The inflammation is due to the normal reaction of the body to the wound and will reside after two to three days.

RISKS

Every dental procedure will have it own risks. Risk can be minimized with detail planning and gentle surgery.

- Tooth or filling beside the surgery cracks.
- The lower teeth nerve or tooth gets compressed/injured, may result in **numbness or altered sensation** on the angle of the mouth or part of the tongue. This condition may continue for several weeks to become normal or it may persist throughout life.
- Jaw bone fracture.

COST

The minor oral surgery cost higher than normal extraction.

- X-ray: RM45(small)-RM90(big)
- Minor oral surgery: RM700-RM1000
- Disposable drill (>RM58), special suture, medication will cost more.

Detail planning before surgery is compulsory. X-ray taking is usually needed. According to our standard procedure of this, not instrument is allowed to get near the root of tongue. Doctor will take the access from the cheek and not from the tongue to minimize the chance of unwanted complication. Deep tooth sectioning is not allowed, the maximum is the neck of the tooth.

Conclusion

Extract the wisdom tooth that causes problem as soon as possible. When your are getting older, the bone become harder and the extraction of the wisdom will be more difficult and more risky.