



Hello Everyone! Welcome to our Autumn edition of Dental News! As always, time flies quickly and Easter is here again. We would like to offer our congratulations to both Wendy and her husband Pepe on the birth of their daughter Hayley who entered the world in early January. Both Wendy and Hayley are doing well and Wendy will be back at the surgery in April, working part time bringing with her lots of photos of baby Hayley to show you all! My youngest child Alex has started Prep and is enjoying it immensely. I am pleased to be able to drop both my kids off at the same time now in only one location! Olivia is now 8 years old and is doing Year 3- Wow! I tell Wendy and Lisa who both have babies, to enjoy them while they can! I would like to welcome Dr Nancy Xu to our practice. Nancy brings with her a wealth of experience having worked in China and here in Australia- and she speaks fluent Mandarin, much like our esteemed prime minister! As always, I wish you and your families a safe and happy Easter holiday and if you like to indulge do it wisely. Enjoy your chocolate treats with a hot drink to wash them down (and to melt them). Do not graze or suck on sweets and lollies over long periods of time and brush your teeth with fluoridated toothpaste afterwards thoroughly.



DO YOU SUFFER FROM SENSITIVE TEETH?



Sensitivity is one of the most common complaints that we see in the surgery. There are many causes of tooth sensitivity, most of which can be treated very easily.

Cavities caused by dental decay are the most obvious cause of tooth sensitivity. What about some of the other causes?

Teeth can become sensitive through gum recession caused by periodontal disease and tooth brush abrasion. People who are aggressive when brushing can over time remove the enamel from teeth leaving the inner layer of dentine exposed, causing discomfort and often pain especially with cold food or drink.

Cracked teeth can also cause tooth discomfort and sensitivity, particularly upon biting hard or chewy foods. Drinking cold water, eating sugary foods and cold air may all cause sensitivity if you have the above conditions.

We can help to fix the causes of sensitivity by cleaning the teeth regularly, applying fluoride to the teeth and placing small fillings in teeth that have been brushed too heavily. We may also recommend a specially formulated tooth paste designed for people who suffer from general sensitivity.

It is always best to have any discomfort checked by us as soon as it commences.



EASTER HOURS

We shall be closed for the Easter break from Friday 21st March until Tuesday 25th March. If you experience a dental emergency during this time please contact the Emergency Dental Service on **9853 1811**. They are open on all public holidays.



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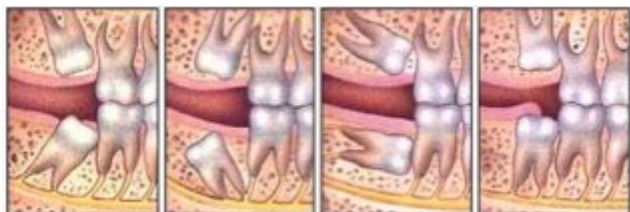
Dr. Selina Soh

Dr. Nancy Xu



WHAT IS AN IMPACTED WISDOM TOOTH?

Wisdom teeth also known as third molars are the last teeth to erupt. Wisdom teeth may become a problem for you as they grow and develop in each corner of your mouth. Problems often develop gradually since development normally spans several years. The jawbone grows to approximately its adult size by your late teens. Unfortunately, that size is often too small to hold developing wisdom teeth. This happens because our jaws are smaller than those of early humans who needed large jaws and more teeth for their tougher diet. When there is not enough room for your wisdom teeth, they may become impacted, or partially trapped in the jawbone and gums. The crown, or top of the tooth, may erupt, or just break through the gum, or it may remain completely within the bone. The roots can grow in unusual directions and may cause a variety of problems in your mouth and with your sinus cavity or the nerve in your lower jaw. The primary preventive measure for wisdom teeth is removal, preferably at an early stage. A tooth becomes impacted due to lack of space in the dental arch and its eruption is therefore prevented by gum, bone, another tooth or all three. Lack of space occurs because our jaws have become smaller through evolution. We do not lose teeth through decay as frequently as in the past and our diet does not wear down our teeth as much. Impacted wisdom teeth can grow in a variety of directions. This is illustrated below.



Not everyone has problems with their wisdom teeth. Factors that determine whether you will have problems include the size of your jaw and how your wisdom teeth grow in. There may be pain and swelling, or you may have no symptoms at all even though the other teeth in your mouth may be at risk of damage. In addition to actual pain, common problems caused by wisdom teeth can include crowding, decay, gum disease, poor position, and cysts. Since it is not practical for most people to evaluate how their wisdom teeth are developing, the best approach is to visit our dentists for an evaluation. Our dentists will review your dental history, take dental X-rays, and perform an examination to determine the general health of your mouth and the condition of your wisdom teeth. If a problem with your wisdom teeth is detected, our dentists may recommend surgery to remove them and eliminate or avoid any unpleasant symptoms. Early removal is best for most patients as it usually helps to avoid more serious problems later on.

Wisdom teeth generally cause problems when they erupt partially through the gum. Below are the most common reasons for removing wisdom teeth.

Tooth Decay: Saliva, bacteria and food particles can collect around an impacted wisdom tooth, causing it, or the next tooth to decay. It is very difficult to remove such decay. Pain and infection will usually follow.

Gum Infection: When a wisdom tooth is partially erupted, food and bacteria collect under the gum causing a local infection. This may result in bad breath, pain, swelling and the inability to open your mouth fully. The infection can spread to involve the cheek and neck. Once the initial episode occurs, each subsequent attack becomes more frequent and more severe.

Pressure Pain: Pain may also come from the pressure of the erupting wisdom tooth against other teeth. In some cases this pressure may cause the erosion of these teeth.

Orthodontic Reasons: Many younger patients have had prolonged orthodontic treatment to straighten teeth. Wisdom teeth may cause movement of teeth particularly the front teeth when they try to erupt. This will compromise the orthodontic result.

Cyst Formation: A cyst (fluid filled sac) can develop from the soft tissue around an impacted wisdom tooth. Cysts cause bone destruction, jaw expansion and displacement or damage to nearby teeth. The removal of the tooth and cyst is necessary to prevent further bone loss. Tumours may develop within these cysts or the jaw may fracture spontaneously if the cyst grows very large.

Prosthetic Reasons: Patients who are to have dentures constructed should have any wisdom tooth removed. If a wisdom tooth erupts beneath a denture it will cause severe irritation and if removed, the patient will need to have a new denture constructed as the shape of the gum will have changed.

It is very important to talk to our dentists about extraction procedure, risks, possible complications and outcomes of the removal of these teeth. The actual extraction may be done by our dentists or it may be referred to a specialist. This decision is based on the dentist's preference and the unique features of each individual case. If you decide after consulting with our dentists to not have any teeth extracted, they should be monitored at every dental visit.