

DT03lite Removing Teeth

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Andrew J Sidebottom

BDS (Hons) FDSRCS (Eng) MBChB (Hons) FRCS (Eng) FRCS (OMFS)
Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon

NHS

Maxillofacial Unit
Queens Medical Centre, Derby Road, Nottingham
Tel: -44 115 924 9924 ext 65895

Private

Julie Riley
BMI Park Hospital, Arnold, Nottingham
Tel: - 44 115 9662125
Email: jriley@bmihospitals.co.uk

www.andrewsidebottom.com



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This document will give you information about removing teeth. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

Why do I need to have a tooth removed?

There are many reasons why you may need to have a tooth removed, such as tooth decay, gum disease and trauma.

What are the benefits of removing a tooth?

Surgery can prevent symptoms returning or improve the chances of success of other dental or orthodontic treatments.

Are there any alternatives to removing a tooth?

Simple painkillers can help control mild pain. Sometimes root-canal treatment will help to treat infection and pain. Your surgeon may be able to rebuild your tooth.

What does the procedure involve?

Most teeth can be removed easily under a local anaesthetic. However, removing a tooth can sometimes be difficult. The procedure can take up to forty minutes. Your surgeon will loosen and remove the tooth with instruments (see figure 1). Sometimes removing a tooth can involve cutting the gum to uncover the tooth, removing bone around the tooth and dividing the tooth with a drill.

What complications can happen?

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Swelling and bruising
- Infection
- Dry socket
- Retained roots
- Damage to nearby teeth
- Sinus problems
- Broken jaw
- Not being able to open the mouth fully (trismus) and jaw stiffness
- Damage to nerves
- Bisphosphonate-associated osteonecrosis of the jaw

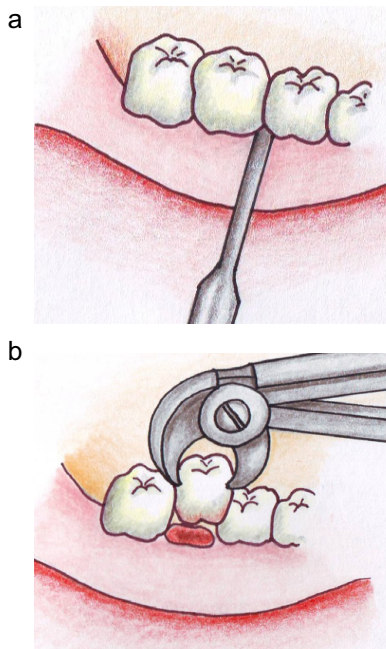


Figure 1

- a An elevator is used to loosen the tooth
- b Forceps are used to remove the tooth

How soon will I recover?

After the procedure your surgeon will make sure that any bleeding has stopped. You should be able to go home the same day. Try to leave the wound alone for the first 24 hours. You should then rinse your mouth gently with hot, salty water four times a day for the next two days.

You should not do any strenuous activities for the first 48 hours, to reduce the risk of bleeding, swelling and bruising. You may need to take up to a week off work.

Most people make a full recovery without any symptoms.

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Summary

Teeth can sometimes cause serious problems. Removing a tooth is usually a safe and effective way to prevent symptoms coming back.

Acknowledgements

Author: Mr Paul Lyons B.Ch.D. and Mr Andrew Sidebottom FDSRCS FRCS

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This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.