

Top Tips for aftercare

- Avoid mouthwash, mouth rinses, hot food and drinks and strenuous activity for the first 24 hours.
- After 24 hours, gently rinse your mouth with warm salt water (one teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water) 3-4 times per day, always after meals. Be very careful not to dislodge any blood clot in the tooth socket.
- If the socket bleeds, apply pressure by biting down on a clean, rolled up handkerchief placed over the affected area for about 10 minutes. Repeat if still bleeding.
- Take regular painkillers if needed.
- Use a cold compress to ease swelling and sleeping propped up with an extra pillow can help.
- Bruising of the jaw muscles can cause stiffness; this wears off after seven to ten days.
- Eat a well-balanced, soft diet for a few days until you're able to chew carefully with your remaining teeth.
- Brush your teeth carefully, using a child's toothbrush, taking care not to dislodge blood clots in the tooth socket; these prevent bleeding and help protect from infection.
- Complete any course of antibiotics that you may have been given.
- Avoid smoking as it affects the body's ability to heal.
- If pain or swelling worsens or you get a raised temperature, contact your dentist.

Your guide to having teeth removed

This guide has been produced with the help of

- the Oral Surgery Managed Clinical Network in Shropshire Telford and Wrekin
- NHS England - North Midlands
- Local Dental Network - Shropshire and Staffordshire
- Dental Public Health - Shropshire and Staffordshire



For more information, contact your
dentist.
For non urgent medical / dental advice
please contact
NHS 111



Having a tooth removed is a surgical procedure and as such carries a few risks.

Here are some of the common reasons why teeth are removed:

- pain
- abscess
- tooth decay
- gum disease
- prosthetics (false teeth)
- to correct irregular teeth, remove extra teeth or to make space.
- cosmetic (for appearance)

Sometimes, having a tooth removed can affect nearby teeth.



What should I expect afterwards?

- Some slight bleeding is normal for a day or so - this can be controlled with pressure over the area.
- Your dentist will advise you about using painkillers to help ease any pain.
- Some swelling and bruising is normal and usually at its worst on the second day, but should disappear within a week or two.
- You might also have difficulty opening your mouth wide; again this generally returns to normal within a week or two.
- Any stitches you have will fall out by themselves in about 2-4 weeks.
- You may need to take time off work or school – your dentist will advise you about this.

Removal of upper molar teeth

The roots of upper molar teeth may be close to the sinuses in your nose.

Very rarely, after removal of a tooth there can be fracture of the supporting bone and pain in the surrounding area. This may require treatment by a specialist oral surgeon in hospital .

Any risks will be explained by your dentist.

Removal of lower molar teeth

Some teeth are very close to nerves in the lower jaw. This can cause numbness, pain or tingling to the tongue, lip and chin area. If this happens, it is usually temporary but occasionally it can be permanent.

Your dentist is likely to take x-rays of the teeth which can help tell you whether your teeth are close to the nerves. Where there is a high risk of nerve injury you may be referred to a specialist oral surgeon.

Please discuss all of this with your dentist to help you understand what is involved.



What is involved in removing a tooth?

Usually tooth removal is straightforward and takes a few minutes. You should not feel pain during the procedure but you will feel pressure and hear noises.

If any stitches are needed these will dissolve in about 2-4 weeks.

Keep the area very clean while it heals - your dentist will tell you how best to do this.

Good dental hygiene

Plaque is a clear, sticky film made up of bacteria and food debris that coats the surface of the teeth. Some of this bacteria turns the sugar in your mouth into acid, which in turn causes cavities and decay. Plaque bacteria can also cause gum disease.

To help prevent dental disease:

- Avoid snacks or acidic drinks between meals.
- Reduce your refined carbohydrate or sugar intake.
- Brush twice-daily with fluoride toothpaste.
- Visit your dentist regularly.