

# TIPS AND TRICKS WISDOM TEETH

Wisdom teeth are the third and final set of molars that most people get in their late teen or early twenties. Sometimes these teeth can be a valuable asset to the mouth when healthy and properly aligned, but more often than not, they must be removed. Wisdom teeth present possible problems when they are misaligned or positioned horizontally, angled toward or away from the other teeth or they can even be angled inward or outward. In addition, they can be trapped completely within the gum tissue or even the jawbone. Teeth that remain partially or completely entrapped within the gum tissue or the jawbone are called "impacted."



**Bleeding** may occur occasionally for several hours after the tooth has been extracted. To control it, you can place a piece of clean moist gauze or a moistened tea bag over the empty tooth socket and bite down firmly for about 45 minutes. The tannic acid in tea helps healing blood clots to form.



**Facial swelling** in the area where the tooth was extracted typically occurs. To minimize swelling, place a piece of ice, wrapped in a cloth, on that area of your face for 10 minutes, removing the ice for 20 minutes, and then repeating.



**Pain medications**, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) can be taken for minor pain. Your dentist or oral surgeon may prescribe more potent pain relievers, if necessary.



**Antibiotics** may have been prescribed prior to tooth extraction. These will treat any active infection around the wisdom tooth that was extracted. You should continue to take the antibiotics until the full prescription has been taken.



**Foods** should be chewed on the side of the mouth opposite the extraction. You will want to avoid hot liquids and alcoholic beverages for at least 24 hours. Consuming a soft or liquid diet for the first 24 hours will be the easiest on your mouth and be the least painful.



**Brush your teeth**, but avoid the teeth directly neighboring the extracted tooth during the first 24 hours. On day two, resume the gentle brushing of your teeth. Do not use commercial mouth rinses as these can irritate the spot where the wisdom tooth was extracted

