



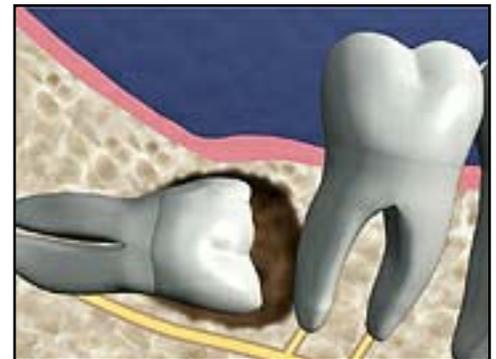
# Why Do We Remove Wisdom Teeth?

For your dental health.

Your last molars, called the third molars or wisdom teeth, typically begin to come in (erupt) during the late teen years or early twenties. When they don't have room to grow in, or they're trapped in your jaw because they are tilted or rotated, they are impacted.

## An impacted wisdom tooth can cause pain, infection, tooth damage

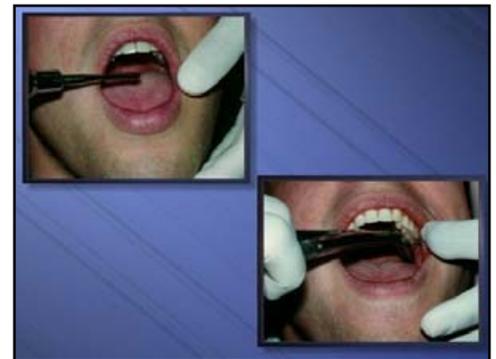
- As your wisdom tooth tries to erupt at an angle, it can push on the neighboring tooth, causing pain and possibly damaging the tooth.
- Food gets trapped next to the wisdom tooth, making the area a breeding ground for the bacteria that cause decay and periodontal (gum) disease.
- An infection called pericoronitis may develop around the impacted tooth, and this infection can spread into the face and jaw.
- Your jaw may become painful and the surrounding gums may swell and become tender.
- A fluid-filled sac called a cyst may develop around the impacted tooth; this can destroy a great deal of jaw bone.



*An impacted wisdom tooth*

## Early removal can prevent problems

You can avoid the pain and possible damaging effects of an impacted wisdom tooth by having it removed early, before its roots are fully developed. We can monitor the development of your wisdom teeth with X-rays, and remove them as soon as we determine that they will likely cause difficulties.



*Early removal is best*

## Why we sometimes extract fully emerged wisdom teeth



*Avoid future problems*

Even if your wisdom teeth came in properly, they can still cause problems. They're located at the back of your mouth, making them extremely difficult to brush and floss, so it's easy for plaque to collect on them. Plaque buildup can cause decay and periodontal disease, which can result in a host of other difficulties. For these reasons, we'll usually recommend removing wisdom teeth, even if they've emerged.