

NICE Guidance on the Removal of Wisdom Teeth

Maxillofacial

Patient Information Leaflet

What is NICE Guidance?

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) provides national guidance and advice to improve health and social care.

When the Institute evaluates these things, it is called an appraisal. Each appraisal takes around 12 months to complete and involves the manufacturers of the technology, patient groups, and professional organisations.

NICE was asked to look at wisdom teeth removal and provide guidance to the NHS which will help dentists and surgeons decide when wisdom teeth should be removed.

What are wisdom teeth and why are they operated on?

Adult teeth normally come through from the age of 6 upwards, with the wisdom teeth being the last to arrive (usually between the ages of 18 and 24 years).

Sometimes, as wisdom teeth come through, they cause problems. The term used to describe wisdom teeth that don't come through normally is impacted wisdom teeth. Two reasons for this are a lack of space, or other teeth being in the way.

For most people, impacted wisdom teeth cause no problems at all, but some people can suffer problems such as inflammation of the surrounding gum, a higher risk of tooth decay, gum disease in other teeth, and possibly problems with teeth in later life.

Removal of wisdom teeth is probably one of the most common operations carried out in the UK. Impacted wisdom teeth have sometimes been removed whether or not they were causing problems.

There is no reliable evidence to suggest that operating on impacted wisdom teeth that are not causing any problems has any benefit for the patient.

In fact, every operation has some risk.



Impacted wisdom teeth that are free from disease (healthy) should not be operated on. There are two reasons for this:

1. There is no reliable evidence to suggest that this practice benefits patients.
2. Patients who do have healthy wisdom teeth removed are being exposed to the risks of surgery. These can include:
 - Nerve damage
 - Damage to other teeth
 - Infection
 - Bleeding
 - Rarely, death

Also, after surgery to remove wisdom teeth, patients may:

- Have swelling and pain
- Be unable to open their mouth fully

Patients who have impacted wisdom teeth that are not causing problems should visit their dentist for their usual check-ups.

Only patients who have diseased wisdom teeth, or other problems with their mouth, should have their wisdom teeth removed.

Your dentist or oral surgeon will be aware of the sort of disease or condition which would require you to have surgery. Examples include:

- Untreatable tooth decay.
- Abscesses.
- Cysts or tumour.
- Disease of the tissues around the tooth.
- If the tooth is in the way of other surgery.

Will NICE review its guidance?

Yes. NICE reviews their guidance regularly. Patient information within the Trust is reviewed every three years to make sure it is up to date, or sooner if new guidance becomes available.

Leaflet Details

Approved by: CA - PD & ILG

Date of Publication: 18/12/2017

Reference Number: 00011150/PIL077

Author: Cecily Pike

Review Date: 01/12/2020



Other formats

If you would like to receive this information in an alternative format, then please contact : 01539 795497.

Travelling to our hospitals

For the best way to plan your journey visit our website:

<http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 01539 795497.

Useful Contact Details

NHS 111 (for 24 hour urgent health advice): telephone 111

Your Information

If you would like to know how we use, share, disclose and secure your information and your rights of access to the information we hold about you, visit the Trust's website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01539 795497.

Evidence

Details of the evidence used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: Patient Information Officer at 01524 512476.

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact PALS on 01539 795497.

UHMBT is a no smoking Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any of the hospital sites. You can contact the NHS North Lancashire Stop Smoking services on the number below:

NHS Quit Squad - **0800 328 6297**

If you live in Cumbria, please call **0300 013 3000** to find a local pharmacy who are offers 1-2-1 support and nicotine replacement therapy.

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay Trust: a great place to be cared for; a great place to work.