What do I need to know about oral surgery?

During a regular examination, your general dentist will examine your gums and jaw for swelling, infection or decay. Digital X-rays can help to identify any hidden complications. If extraction is diagnosed, a surgery will be scheduled with the oral surgeon. Please inform your general dentist about past illnesses and current medications before scheduling your surgery.

Your general dentist will help prepare for your surgery and discuss any concerns you may have. For example, he/she can go over what types of anesthesia and pain-reducing medications are available for you. More often than not, our oral surgeon patients are in and out within an hour or two.

Please keep in mind that we’ll do whatever we can to make your oral surgery experience with us as comfortable and efficient as possible. All questions and concerns will be answered courteously and promptly.

In general, here are some best practice tips to follow before surgery. Your oral surgeon will provide you with any final details:

• Do not eat, drink or smoke after midnight the night before.
• Make sure that your mouth is well-cleansed to avoid infection. While rinsing your mouth, avoid swallowing the water.
• Wear comfortable clothing the day of.
• Wear flat shoes, preferably sneakers.
• Ask someone to drive you to and from.
• Have someone monitor you post-surgery for at least the first 24 hours after surgery.

What happens after oral surgery?

Following surgery, some discomfort, numbing or tingling is to be expected. The following tips will help you experience a faster, easier recovery:

• Use cold compresses to decrease swelling. Bleeding should subside within two to three hours after surgery.
• Take any medication prescribed to relieve any discomfort. It may be best to drink something or eat something soft before taking medication to avoid stomach upset.
• Drink clear, room-temperature liquids until you can comfortably eat soft foods, e.g. ice cream, Jell-O and pudding. Hard or crunchy foods can be resumed in two weeks.
• Do not spit, smoke or suck through a straw immediately after surgery. These activities may dislodge a blood clot, encourage bleeding and delay the healing process. Also, do not rinse with any mouth wash for one week. If you need to rinse, use warm salt water for gargling.
• Do not brush your mouth the night after surgery. You can brush the next day, but avoid the tender area.
• Get plenty of rest right after surgery. Try propping yourself up on pillows to be more comfortable.
• Do not smoke for at least seven days after surgery. This will help avoid dry sockets and infection.
• Do not drink alcohol the day of surgery or while taking pain medication.

For more information, visit smilegeneration.com/oralsurgery
What are wisdom teeth?

Wisdom teeth, or third molars, are the last teeth to grow in your mouth. They are called wisdom teeth because they typically appear during young adulthood/teenage years, typically the age of maturity and “wisdom”.

Why do I need to get my wisdom teeth removed?

The size of your jawbone and the way your wisdom teeth grow are determining factors for whether or not you are a candidate for oral surgery. In general, most dentists recommend extraction before your 20s for easier removal and faster recovery. If left untreated, an impacted or erupting wisdom tooth can cause damage to surrounding tissue or teeth, such as:

- Decay: A wisdom tooth that is too hard to clean due to its odd position or impaction under gum tissue might lead to cavity-causing bacteria, which can affect the adjacent tooth.
- Gum (periodontal) disease: A partial eruption of your wisdom tooth can create a gum opening where bacteria and food can enter, get trapped and cause infection. Pain, swelling and jaw stiffness may result. Please ask for our Gum (Periodontal) Disease brochure for more information.
- Crowding: An impacted or erupting wisdom tooth with no room to grow can push on surrounding teeth, causing teeth displacement and/or structural tooth damage.
- Poor Position: Gum irritation can occur if your wisdom tooth is growing toward your cheek. A crooked wisdom tooth can also affect your ability to bite down.
- Cysts: A fluid-filled sac (cyst) or tumor can form on or near an impacted wisdom tooth, which can destroy surrounding bone or roots.

What is an oral surgeon?

Although general dentists can perform wisdom teeth extractions, many refer their patients to an oral surgeon. An oral surgeon is a mouth and jaw specialist who has completed an extra 4-6 years of training in a hospital-based residency program and is an expert in any of the following:

- Replacing broken or missing teeth with dental implants
- Correction of facial birth defects, like cleft lips or palate
- Emergency reconstructive surgery, such as repairing broken or shattered jaw and cheekbones after a car accident

Flexible financial options for your smile

We have a wide range of payment options and welcome most insurance plans and major credit cards. Our staff is trained to assist you in maximizing your insurance coverage, minimizing your out-of-pocket costs and offering arrangements and other options to pay for your treatment over time.
Oral Surgery
Information about oral surgery and teeth extraction procedures

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