There are two nerves that lie very close to the roots of the lower wisdom teeth. One of these nerves supplies feeling to your lower lip, chin and lower teeth. The other supplies feeling to your tongue and helps with taste. Sometimes these nerves may be bruised when a wisdom tooth is taken out.

This can cause tingling or numbness in

your lip, chin or tongue, or more rarely affect your taste. In most case this doesn’t last, but in a small number of people recovery may not be complete. Between 2 and 20% of people will have some tingling or numbness that can last several weeks, between 0.5 and 2% will have permanent problems.

Upper wisdom teeth generally cause fewer problems and are simpler and quicker to remove. There are no nerves close by that can be damaged, however there is a small risk of breaking the bone behind the wisdom tooth (tuberosity) which can cause bleeding and/or create a passageway between the mouth and the sinus (the air-filled spaces that lie either side of the nose and beneath your cheeks). If this happens it may need a surgical operation to repair it either at the time of your wisdom tooth removal or at a later date.

**Feedback**

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care of treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

**Telephone:** 01553 613351 or 01553 613343  
**Email:** pals@qehkl.nhs.uk  
**Letter:** PALS, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King’s Lynn NHS Foundation Trust, Gayton Road, King’s Lynn PE30 4ET

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

**Oral and Maxillofacial Department**

Wisdom Tooth Removal

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* Alternatively a general anaesthetic maybe given to be completely asleep
* Your surgeon will discuss with you which method is most appropriate
* The degree of difficulty of the surgery, any medical conditions and personal circumstances will be taken into account when choosing a method
* The procedure can involve a cut to the gum close to the tooth; sometimes bone around the tooth is removed with a drill. The procedure can be made easier by sectioning the tooth itself into smaller pieces

**What to expect After the Operation**

* Expect some pain from the operation site. This should be helped with pain killers
* There is great variation in the pain and discomfort suffered by individuals. This also depends how difficult the procedure is. The average recovery is between 5-7 days
* Swelling is common and tends to be worse on the 2nd and 3rd day after surgery improving after about a week
* Bruising of the face and upper neck occasionally occurs

**Some Possible Complications**

Removal of Wisdom Teeth is a date and very common operation but there is some risk associated as with most procedures

* Bleeding: Most bleeding will have stopped within ½hour after the operation. Blood stained saliva maybe noticed for a day or two/ More persistent bleeding may occur which should be dealt with by contacting your surgeon
* Swelling: Sometimes there maybe swelling which may result in limited jaw opening
* There may be complications more specific to you which will have been discussed at your consultation

**Removal of Wisdom Teeth**This Information is for patients who may need to have a procedure to remove their impacted wisdom teeth. It explains why they may need to be removed, what is involved and any risks or complications that there may be

**The Wisdom Teeth**Adults normally have 32 teeth. Wisdom teeth (3rd molars) are the last to come through at the back of the mouth. Normally there are 4 wisdom teeth, one each side of the upper and lower jaw.

**Impacted Wisdom Teeth**

If the jaws are too small to accommodate all the teeth, there may not be enough space for the wisdom teeth to come through properly and they become impacted (stuck), this can often cause problems

**Reasons for removal**

* The most common reason is recurrent infection of the gum overlying a tooth that is part way through the gum
* Decay in the wisdom tooth, which your dentist cannot restore
* Infection of the tooth (abscess) due to advanced dental decay
* When the next molar tooth is affected by periodontal disease(gum disease\_ or dental decay due to the impacted wisdom tooth
* Progressive cystic formation around the tooth
* As part of other surgical procedures involving the jaw
* There may be other less common reasons which your surgeon will discuss with you

**The Removal of Wisdom Teeth**

* The procedure can be carried out under local anaesthetic (injections into the gum to numb the area).