

## QUESTIONS ABOUT IMPACTED TEETH

### WHAT IS AN IMPACTED TOOTH?

It is a tooth that is partially or completely under the gum and imbedded into the bone. It is often tilted or lying on its side and is blocked from entering the mouth properly by other teeth nearby or by the bone in the jaw. Impactions occur most often in wisdom teeth. *See back of sheet for illustrations.*

### WHY MUST IMPACTED TEETH BE REMOVED?

Impacted teeth often become infected or cause damage to adjacent teeth or surrounding bone. Cysts or tumors can develop around an impacted tooth. Some orthodontists believe impaction can cause crowding of the remaining teeth. When one wisdom tooth is removed, it is recommended that the opposite wisdom tooth be removed because, without a tooth to bite against, it may cause future problems.

### HOW MANY IMPACTIONS SHOULD BE REMOVED AT ONE TIME?

It is our experience that removal of all impacted teeth at a single surgical appointment is better for a patient. The period of healing following the surgery is the same regardless of the number of impactions removed and the difference in discomfort is minimal.

### HOW ARE IMPACTED TEETH REMOVED?

An incision must be made through the gum and sometimes bone is removed to expose the tooth for extraction. In some cases, it may be necessary to section the tooth into pieces to remove it.

### WHAT KIND OF ANESTHETIC IS USED?

Surgery for impacted teeth can be performed comfortably while you are awake or asleep. The doctor, on the basis of examination, will recommend the proper anesthetic for you.

### WHAT ARE THE AFTER EFFECTS OF REMOVING TEETH?

The immediate after effect is discomfort the first day, followed by swelling the next day. You will be given a prescription to minimize the discomfort. The swelling will disappear over the next few days. Bleeding is usually not a problem. Ordinarily, a day or two after the surgery the patient can return to work. If non-dissolvable sutures are used, they are removed in 5-7 days. Numbness of the lip, chin, and/or tongue may occur after the removal of lower impacted wisdom teeth. This is usually temporary. Only rarely is this permanent. An infrequent after effect is a sore arm (*phlebitis*) from the IV that puts you to sleep. Resting the arm in a sling and applying heat usually takes care of this problem. Other unlikely but possible occurrences include delayed healing, injury to other teeth, broken jaw, sinus infection, injury to the ligaments and muscles of the jaw.

### HOW MUCH DOES REMOVING IMPACTED TEETH COST?

The surgical fee varies depending upon the type of impaction removed. A broad range is from \$250 to \$490 per tooth. If you want to be sedated (*asleep*), there is an additional fee. You may request an estimate of the charges before any procedure is performed. If you have insurance to cover your surgery, we will process your forms as a convenience to you. If your insurance company fails to pay for your surgery, then **you** are responsible for the entire balance. **The insurance copayment**, which is the portion of your surgery that the insurance does not cover, **will be due the day of your surgery**. If you have any questions, please feel free to discuss them with our receptionist.