

Extractions

Extractions: Removing Unsalvageable Teeth

Pulling teeth, as the saying goes, does not have to be a drawn-out, negative experience. We can perform tooth extractions quickly and with minimal discomfort to treat a host of dental conditions, including advanced gum disease. Patients suffering from broken, cracked, and/or excessively decayed or damaged teeth (that aren't good candidates for the alternative treatment, a root canal) will benefit from this often simple and straightforward procedure. We may recommend extractions, also called exodontias, in these situations:

- When wisdom teeth, or third molars, emerge as non-functional, and/or misaligned.
- If a candidate for dentures only has a few worn or compromised remaining teeth on an arch, we may recommend extractions so a full denture can be placed.
- Patients, often younger children, may have impacted teeth positioned to emerge out of alignment, or teeth that block others from erupting.
- Orthodontic patients with overcrowded mouths that require more space along the jaw line to properly align the teeth.

Whatever brings you to us for an extraction, expect to have a thorough examination, including X-rays, before we determine a course of action. You may feel apprehensive, so we dedicate ourselves to answering all of your questions before we proceed. Plan to discuss with us your medical history, any past extractions and associated problems with excessive bleeding,

and any medications you take. In all but simple cases where the tooth is visible above the gum line, we may refer you to an oral surgeon.

The day of your extraction, we anesthetize the area and carefully rock the tooth back and forth to expand the socket and loosen the ligaments. You will feel pressure, but should be “numb” to any real discomfort. For post-extraction care and to protect the blood clot that will form in the empty tooth socket, we advise patients to avoid rinsing, spitting, sucking through straws, hot foods, cigarettes or alcohol during the first 24 hours. If alveolar osteitis—dry socket—occurs, we will recommend an immediate course of action. You should also adhere to a liquid diet during the first day and use clean gauze, or even tea bags, to pack the wound. Remember, a small amount of bleeding is normal, and ice and acetaminophen will help with the swelling and discomfort.

After 24 hours, you’ll begin a regimen of gentle, salt water rinses and resume your normal oral hygiene routine, taking care to avoid the empty socket and the adjacent teeth. Within two weeks, you can expect to feel significantly better.

We partner with you before, during, and after the dental procedures we recommend. If you have an extraction scheduled, you can feel confident that we will fully explain what to expect and will provide thorough and compassionate care. Finally, many patients who have extractions performed benefit from dental implants or mini dental implants paired with crowns to rebuild the tooth, so ask us about this prosthetic option.