

*Kristian*  
DR KRISTIAN VAN MOURIK

ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGEON



# EXPOSURE OF TEETH

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A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

# Tooth exposure

## Sometimes a tooth needs help to break through your gum

When a tooth fails to come through your gum, you may need a surgical procedure to help it come through and move into the right position.

A tooth may fail to erupt for various reasons. It often happens if your teeth are crowded or if the tooth has developed in the wrong position.



IMPACTED UPPER CANINE TEETH

.....  
Tooth exposure 2

.....  
Why an unerupted tooth is a problem 3

.....  
Tooth exposure procedure 4

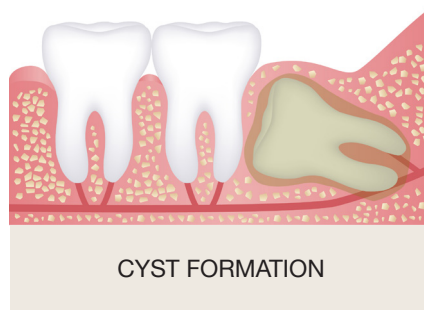
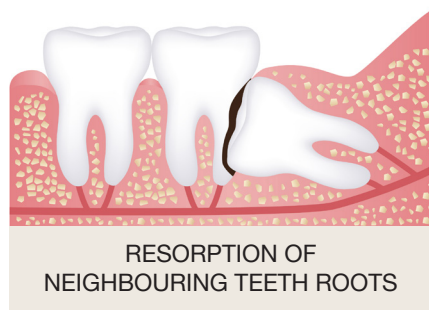
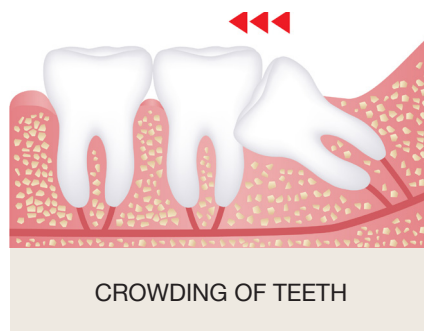
.....  
Recovery and care after tooth exposure 5

.....  
Possible complications of the surgery 6

This guide is for general information only. Dr van Mourik will assess you individually, and recommend treatment which is most appropriate for you.

## Why an unerupted tooth is a problem

If a tooth does not emerge from your gum, a cyst can form around it and become infected. An unerupted tooth may also push other teeth out of position or cause damage to the roots of nearby teeth.



## Tooth exposure procedure

### Anaesthesia

Dr van Mourik will discuss the options with you and the choice of anaesthetic will depend on the number of teeth to be exposed, the difficulty of the surgery, your general health and your personal preference. If you have previously had a reaction to an anaesthetic drug please advise Dr van Mourik.

### Local anaesthetic

This is an option if the surgery is simple. The local anaesthetic will numb your teeth, gums and parts of your nose and jaw. Procedures performed under local anaesthetic are done in Dr van Mourik's private surgery.

### Intravenous (IV) sedation

You may benefit from a sedative drug administered into a vein during local anaesthesia. It makes you feel sleepy and relaxed. If your procedure is done with IV sedation, it will be performed in Dr van Mourik's private surgery.

### General anaesthetic

You can have your tooth exposure surgery performed in an accredited private hospital with general anaesthetic administered by a specialist anaesthetist.

### How unerupted teeth are exposed

The buried tooth is covered by gum and sometimes by a thin layer of bone as well. Dr van Mourik removes the gum and any bone covering the tooth. If the tooth is deeply imbedded in your jaw, he makes a small tunnel through the jawbone to provide a path for the tooth to erupt.

Your orthodontist may ask him to attach a small gold chain to the tooth which is then attached to your braces. When the bone and gum have been removed, the tooth can then be seen from inside your mouth. Alternatively, the gum may be closed over the chain.

The surgery is carefully designed to minimise the risks of injury to nearby nerves and other teeth.

The procedure takes 15 to 25 minutes.

## Recovery after exposure of tooth surgery

If you have had general anaesthetic or intravenous sedation for your tooth implant surgery, you should not drive, operate machinery or make important decisions for at least 24 hours. If done under local anaesthetic, you can drive home yourself.

Dr van Mourik will give you detailed post-operative instructions during your initial consultation. To maximise your chance of making a quick recovery without complications, please pay careful attention to these instructions.

### Work/School

Most people return to work one day after their tooth exposure surgery, while a few have to take more than a day or two off.

### Pain management

Normal painkillers such as Nurofen® and Panadol® are usually all you will need. An icepack can help reduce any swelling or pain. Painkillers may be required up to 1 week after the surgery.

### Diet

A soft food diet is recommended for 1-2 days after surgery. By 1 week you will most likely be eating and drinking normally.

### Oral hygiene

Cleanliness is crucial to reduce the chances of a post-operative infection.

## Possible complications

It is unusual to have complications if a skilled oral and maxillofacial surgeon removes your wisdom teeth.

However, all surgeries have some potential risks and complications. The risks are higher if you:

- Have poor general health including diabetes and/or immunosuppression.
- Smoke
- Have poor oral hygiene or periodontal disease
- Have had radiotherapy to your jaw
- The extraction was difficult or complicated

**Dr van Mourik makes every effort to minimise risk. Most people having surgery will not have any complications.** He will discuss the risks with you to make sure you are well informed before any surgery is performed.

If you are concerned about any potential risk or complications please discuss with Dr van Mourik. The risks of tooth exposure surgery are.

**Infection:** This is generally treated with antibiotics and improved oral hygiene.

**Non-movement:** Very occasionally the tooth refuses to move into position.

**Damage to neighbouring teeth:** If this occurs the nearby tooth may need to be root-filled or removed.

**Gum recovering the tooth:** Occasionally the gum will grow over the tooth.

**Lip sores:** The stretching of the lips during surgery can cause lip sores and bruising. They are not common and usually heal over time.

**Excessive bleeding:** Rarely occurs, if this happens apply firm pressure by biting on a gauze pad.

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## CONTACT US

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