

# Van Beek Family Dentistry

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## **Reasons For Taking Out Wisdom Teeth in the Late Teens/Early 20s:**

1. We usually recommend that impacted wisdom teeth be removed in young adults.
2. Impacted wisdom teeth carry with them significant risk of complications if they are not removed. These complications include infection, cyst formation, and damage to the adjacent healthy tooth.
3. In the late teens to early twenties, removal and healing are much easier. Generally after age 25, it becomes a significantly more difficult and risky procedure. And by age 30 to 35, we consider the risk of removal to be greater than the benefits and impacted teeth that are left in are monitored with updated x-rays every 5 years.
4. Impacted wisdom teeth sit lower in the jaw. This increases the risk of the roots growing closer to and interfering with the main nerve. In this case, if they need to be removed later, there is a much greater risk of permanent nerve damage causing numbness. The earlier they are removed, the less of a problem this nerve interference is.
5. After age 30, wisdom teeth are only removed if problems such as those mentioned above are found.
6. Often, removal after age 30 results in permanent loss of bone at the angle of the jaw (see two sets of red lines) unless extensive grafting with regeneration of bone and soft tissue of the gums supporting the remaining teeth is done.
7. When a wisdom tooth is semi-impacted or only partly erupted, the tooth is partly exposed to the oral environment. In this case, there is a risk of 3 in 4 (75%) of developing infection around the semi-impacted tooth. Besides pain and swelling, this infection can damage bone or the neighboring healthy tooth.

Wisdom tooth removal in young people is usually a sensible way to prevent major problems later in life.