

Specialist Paediatric Dental Service

Supernumerary teeth



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What is a supernumerary tooth?

A supernumerary tooth is an extra tooth that forms in addition to the normal number of teeth. This extra tooth may occur with baby or adult teeth. They are more common in the upper set of teeth than the lower and can appear anywhere in the mouth.

Why do supernumerary teeth occur?

The cause is not always known but some reasons for extra teeth include:

- Family history
- As part of certain developmental conditions (including cleft lip and palate and Gardner syndrome).

Is it common?

It varies between 0-2% of the population and is more common in adult teeth. People with a supernumerary baby tooth are more likely to have a supernumerary adult tooth but this does not always happen. It is also more common in males than females. One or more supernumerary teeth can occur.

How would I know if I had supernumerary tooth/teeth?

Supernumerary teeth can cause the following issues with bite:

- The supernumerary tooth may sit in the gums and prevent the eruption of another tooth.
- The supernumerary teeth may sit in the gums and cause a gap between teeth called a diastema.
- The supernumerary tooth may come through the gum (erupt) into the mouth and cause crowding or twisting of the other teeth.

An examination and an x-ray are needed for diagnosis. There are several different types of supernumerary teeth.

- **Conical:** peg-shaped teeth that often occur between the upper central incisors.
- **Tuberculate:** barrel-shaped teeth with multiple cusps. These rarely erupt into the mouth.
- **Supplemental:** duplicates of normal teeth that often erupt.
- **Odontomes:** a mass of tooth tissue that does not quite fully form into a tooth. These teeth-like structures rarely erupt.

Management

Treatment of a supernumerary tooth depends on the type, position, effect, or potential effect on the teeth next to it. They do not always need removing and may be monitored. Every case is unique. Your dentist/paediatric dentist/orthodontist will advise you of all options in your case.

Supernumerary tooth/teeth may be removed due to:

- Changes to the eruption of other teeth.
- Crowding or twisting of other teeth.
- Changes to the way your teeth look.
- Difficulties in maintaining oral hygiene.
- In preparation for dental treatment such as orthodontic treatment or implant placement.

Removal of supernumerary teeth may be simple where they are visible in the mouth and require only the use of instruments to lift and/or grasp the tooth. Others may need to be surgically removed. This is a type of procedure where gum tissue or bone is removed to gain access to completely remove the tooth. Stitches are then used to close the site for it to heal properly.

Supernumerary tooth/teeth may be left in place and monitored if there is:

- No effect on other the teeth next to it.
- No major dental treatment planned.

For further help or information

Contact details

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