

Dentist in Rapid City

Rapid City Family Dentist Specializes in Oral Surgery

The removal of wisdom teeth is a rite of passage, for many American teens. Wisdom teeth, otherwise known as third molars, are the last teeth to erupt, or push through the gum. This usually occurs during the teenage years, and according to Rapid City dentist and oral surgeon, Dr. John Bridges, “this is also the best time to have them removed”.

Dr. Bridges, a member of Ray Dental Group in Rapid City, explains, “It’s easier to remove wisdom teeth when a patient is younger. As a teenager, the roots of the wisdom teeth are not fully formed, the surrounding bone is softer, and the chance of damaging nearby nerves or other structures is lessened.”

“With age, removal becomes more complicated. As wisdom teeth grow, the roots become longer, and more difficult to remove. Partially or totally impacted wisdom teeth are more likely to cause problems as a patient ages,” clarifies this Rapid City oral surgeon.

A tooth becomes impacted when its growth and eruption are prevented by overlying gum, bone, or another tooth. A tooth may be partially impacted, meaning a portion of it has broken through the gum; or totally impacted and unable to break through the gum at all.

“Most wisdom tooth extractions performed in our Rapid City dental office involve the use of local anesthesia, intravenous sedation, or general anesthesia”, says Rapid City dentist Dr. Bridges. “I discuss the anesthetic options with each patient to decide on which alternative is right for them.”

Dr. John Bridges is a graduate of the University of Texas. He has a special interest in oral surgery at Ray Dental Group in Rapid City.