Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Referral | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/specialist-care/oral-maxillofacial-surgery/

Details:

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is a specialty that combines dental, medical and surgical knowledge to diagnose and treat conditions of the mouth, gums, teeth and jaws. At Core Dental we do not perform complex oral surgery ourselves. When you need it, we refer you to a registered specialist oral and maxillofacial surgeon from our partnering specialists, who see patients in Melbourne's CBD or in Wyndham. Your Core Dental dentist can arrange the referral and explain what to expect. Results vary for each person.

What is oral and maxillofacial surgery?

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is a specialty that combines dental, medical and surgical knowledge and skills. It involves the diagnosis, surgery and treatment of diseases, injuries and defects affecting the mouth, gums, teeth and jaws, including how these structures function and how they look. It sits alongside the other specialist services we work with, including periodontics , endodontics and prosthodontics .

What qualifications do oral and maxillofacial surgeons hold?

Oral and maxillofacial surgeons are specialists registered with the Dental Board of Australia. The Board describes the specialty as one "recognised by both the Dental Board of Australia and the Medical Board of Australia", for which "you must hold qualifications in both medicine and dentistry"; where a qualification in it was obtained overseas, the Board requires it to be assessed first by the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons. Registration itself is held with the Dental Board through Ahpra, not with the College, and the specific fellowships or examinations an individual surgeon holds are shown on their own profile rather than being the same for everyone. They complete 15 to 17 years of continuous study and hold degrees in both dentistry and medicine, plus a further four-year qualification in oral and maxillofacial surgery. Depending on their interests, some also hold a Master's degree, for example in Paediatric Maxillofacial Surgery or Surgical Anatomy. You can check any practitioner's registration on the AHPRA register at ahpra.gov.au.

What conditions and procedures can an oral and maxillofacial surgeon help with?

An oral and maxillofacial surgeon may be involved in procedures such as:

removal of wisdom teeth, particularly complex impacted teeth

placement of dental implants, including immediate and conventional implants

orthognathic surgery, which corrects a jaw that does not line up

treatment of oral lesions, biopsies and other diagnostic procedures

treatment of jaw injuries and facial trauma

surgical management of temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders when conservative treatments have not helped

Whether surgery is recommended depends on your examination, imaging and medical history. Your dentist will explain whether a referral is the right step for you.

How do you see an oral and maxillofacial surgeon through Core Dental?

For all oral and maxillofacial surgery, we refer you to our partnering specialists in the heart of Melbourne's CBD or in Wyndham. The steps are usually:

You see one of our dentists, who examines you and takes any imaging you need.

If your treatment needs a specialist surgeon, your dentist explains why and arranges the referral.

The specialist assesses you, explains the options and any fees, and plans your surgery.

After surgery, we continue your general dental care and any restorative treatment with you, in coordination with the specialist.

We choose to provide complex surgical care through a registered specialist so that you are looked after by a practitioner trained for it. Referral arrangements, wait times and fees are set by the specialist, so please ask when your referral is made.

What can you expect before and after surgery?

Your surgeon will explain the procedure, the type of anaesthetic or sedation, the risks, and what recovery involves. Bring relevant medical information and a list of your current medicines, and tell the team about any allergies. Recovery varies with the procedure and the person, and your surgeon will give you written aftercare instructions. You can read more on our page about oral surgery recovery and recovering from wisdom tooth extraction . Ask who to contact if you are worried after your procedure.

What are the risks and limits of oral and maxillofacial surgery?

All surgery carries risks, which differ by procedure. Common considerations include pain, swelling, bleeding, infection and, for some procedures, temporary or lasting changes in feeling. Your surgeon will explain the risks that apply to you, the alternatives and the likely recovery time before you decide. Treatment recommendations are individual, and no outcome can be promised.

How much does oral and maxillofacial surgery cost?

Fees are set by the treating specialist and depend on the procedure, the setting, the type of anaesthetic and any hospital costs. Ask for a written quote at your consultation. Some Medicare or health fund rebates may apply, depending on the procedure and your cover. For the dental treatment we provide, we quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free Payright plans with fortnightly instalments over 3 to 30 months for amounts up to $20,000, subject to eligibility and approval. Terms were published as at September 2026, so please confirm them. See our dental payment plans page.

Where can you start at Core Dental?

You can start at any of our nine practices. Your first step is a dental examination with one of our dentists, who can arrange a referral. Our practices include Southbank , Wyndham , Berwick and

Glenferrie . Wisdom tooth removal and extractions are part of our general dentistry service, and we refer complex cases. Call 13 13 16 to book.

Who provides oral and maxillofacial surgery at Core Dental?

Surgery is provided by registered specialist oral and maxillofacial surgeons who partner with us. Your Core Dental dentist remains your point of contact for your general dental care. You can learn more about our approach on our page about dentists and registered specialists and why seeing a registered specialist matters .

What makes a case complex enough for a surgeon?

The question behind most referrals to an oral and maxillofacial surgeon is not how difficult the procedure looks, but what the imaging shows about the tooth and what sits around it.

The Victorian Department of Health sets out the problem directly: "sometimes, wisdom teeth come through at an angle and push into the gum or the tooth beside them. This is called impaction." Impaction is the single word that explains most surgical referrals, and the Department describes what follows from it — "food and bacteria can get stuck between the wisdom tooth and the tooth next to it, leading to tooth decay and gum infections called pericoronitis", and crowded wisdom teeth that "often lean sideways and rub against the cheek", causing ulcers and chewing problems.

On who does the work, the Department is explicit: wisdom teeth "can be removed by a dentist, but may also need to be referred to an oral maxillofacial surgeon who has done additional training and study in surgery or the teeth, bones, jaws and face."

Two further points from the same source shape the timing of a referral rather than the fact of one.

Imaging decides it, not symptoms alone. "X-rays will help to tell if wisdom teeth might cause problems." A tooth that feels fine can be heading for trouble, and a tooth that aches may not need removing at all — the Department notes that "some wisdom teeth do not cause problems and do not need to be taken out".

Age changes the procedure. "The roots of wisdom teeth are still forming when you are a teenager, so it is easier to take them out at this age. It may be more complicated if you wait until later in life, when the roots are fully formed." This is general information, not a recommendation for any individual: whether and when to remove a tooth is a decision for your own examination.

Signs of infection the Department lists are worth knowing, because they are the ones that turn a routine review into an urgent one: a red, inflamed gum near the tooth, facial swelling, pain and sensitivity, pus from the gum, swollen and sore lymph nodes under the jaw, difficulty opening the mouth and swallowing, fever, food trapping, and bad breath. If you have difficulty breathing or swallowing, call 000.

Source: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Wisdom teeth, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (page reviewed 3 June 2022; accessed 4 November 2026).

Local anaesthetic, sedation or a general anaesthetic — and who gives each

Surgical referrals come with a second question that patients often conflate with the first: will I be awake? These are separate decisions, made by different people under different rules, and the distinction is worth having clearly.

Local anaesthetic. The usual case. The Department of Health notes that if wisdom teeth need removing, "all you may need is a local anaesthetic so you won't feel it", and describes local anaesthetic generally as being "injected into the immediate area to be operated on. For example, your dentist may

inject local anaesthetic into your gum before removing a tooth." You stay awake; the area is numb.

A general anaesthetic. A different pathway, with a different clinician. The Department states that "if your wisdom teeth are deeply impacted (blocked from coming through) and difficult to remove, or for other medical reasons, you may be offered a general anaesthetic", and that "sometimes this can be done with nitrous oxide (also known as happy gas) to make it more comfortable". On who administers it, the Department is unambiguous: "a qualified anaesthetist, who is a medical doctor with specialist training in anaesthetics, administers the general anaesthetic", and that anaesthetist "controls the length of time you are asleep, and constantly monitors your pulse, breathing and blood pressure". Under a general anaesthetic you "lose sensation and become unconscious" — which is why it involves a hospital or day-surgery setting rather than a dental chair.

Dental sedation sits between the two, and is separately regulated. The Dental Board of Australia restricts it: only dentists "whose registration is endorsed for conscious sedation can use this technique in their practice". That is a specific endorsement recorded on the public register, not a general dental qualification — so it is a fair question to ask of whoever is treating you, and it can be checked at ahpra.gov.au.

Practical consequences worth planning around: you will usually be asked "not to drink or eat for several hours before the operation", and the advice after a general anaesthetic is not to "drive a car within 24 hours after the procedure". Arrange a lift before the day, not on it.

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Wisdom teeth betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 3 June 2022) and General anaesthetics betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 30 September 2012); Dental Board of Australia, Conscious sedation, dentalboard.gov.au . All accessed 4 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

Does Core Dental perform oral and maxillofacial surgery itself?

For complex oral surgery we refer you to a registered specialist oral and maxillofacial surgeon from our partnering specialists. Our dentists carry out general treatments such as routine extractions and can arrange the referral.

Where do your partnering surgeons see patients?

Our partnering specialist oral and maxillofacial surgeons see patients in Melbourne's CBD and in Wyndham. Your Core Dental dentist can tell you which location suits your needs when they arrange your referral.

Do I need a referral from a dentist?

We arrange the referral through your Core Dental dentist after an examination, so the surgeon has your records and imaging. Call 13 13 16 and our team will help you book the first appointment.

Is a wisdom tooth removal always done by a surgeon?

No. Many extractions are done by general dentists. A specialist surgeon may be recommended where teeth are impacted or the case is complex. Your dentist will explain which applies to you after examining you.

How long does oral and maxillofacial specialist training take?

Specialist surgeons undertake 15 to 17 years of continuous study. They hold degrees in dentistry and medicine, plus a further four-year qualification in oral and maxillofacial surgery.

What does it mean for a wisdom tooth to be impacted?

The Victorian Department of Health defines it as a tooth that comes "through at an angle and push into the gum or the tooth beside them". It matters because of what follows: food and bacteria trapped between the wisdom tooth and its neighbour, "leading to tooth decay and gum infections called pericoronitis".

What is pericoronitis?

It is the gum infection the Department of Health names around a wisdom tooth where food and bacteria collect. Its listed signs of such an infection include a red, inflamed gum near the tooth, facial swelling, pain and sensitivity, pus from the gum, swollen lymph nodes under the jaw, fever, and difficulty opening the mouth and swallowing. Difficulty breathing or swallowing is a reason to call 000.

Why are wisdom teeth often dealt with in the teenage years?

Because of root development. The Department of Health notes that "the roots of wisdom teeth are still forming when you are a teenager, so it is easier to take them out at this age", and that it "may be more complicated if you wait until later in life, when the roots are fully formed". That is general information about the procedure, not advice about any particular tooth — an examination and X-rays decide that.

Who is qualified to give a general anaesthetic?

Not a dentist. The Department of Health states that "a qualified anaesthetist, who is a medical doctor with specialist training in anaesthetics, administers the general anaesthetic", and monitors your pulse, breathing and blood pressure throughout. Dental conscious sedation is a separate thing, restricted by the Dental Board of Australia to dentists whose registration carries a conscious sedation endorsement.

Will I be able to drive home?

Not after a general anaesthetic. The Department of Health advises not driving "within 24 hours after the procedure", and not driving home at all if you leave within hours of surgery "because your coordination may be affected by the medication". Arrange a lift in advance. After a simple extraction under local anaesthetic the position is usually different — ask us what applies to your own appointment.

Related services and further reading

Specialist care

Prosthodontist

Periodontist

Endodontist

Orthodontist

Paediatric dentistry

Wisdom tooth extraction

Dental implants

Oral surgery recovery

Sleep dentistry

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

Referral to partnering registered specialist oral and maxillofacial surgeons in Melbourne's CBD or Wyndham.

Interest-free payment plans and HICAPS on-site claiming for our dental treatment.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through your practice page, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed
Clinics	Find your nearest practice

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

What does oral and maxillofacial surgery involve?

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is a specialty combining dental, medical and surgical skills to diagnose and treat diseases, injuries and defects of the mouth, gums, teeth and jaws. Core Dental refers patients to registered specialists for this care.

How does Core Dental provide oral and maxillofacial surgery?

For complex oral surgery, Core Dental refers you to a registered specialist oral and maxillofacial surgeon from our partnering specialists. Your Core Dental dentist examines you first and arranges the referral.

Where are Core Dental's partnering oral surgeons located?

Core Dental's partnering specialist oral and maxillofacial surgeons see patients in Melbourne's CBD and in Wyndham. Your dentist will explain which location suits you when arranging your referral.

What qualifications do oral and maxillofacial surgeons have?

They are specialists registered with the Dental Board of Australia and Fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons, with degrees in dentistry and medicine plus a four-year surgical qualification. Core Dental refers only to registered specialists.

Which procedures might an oral surgeon at Core Dental's partners perform?

Procedures can include complex wisdom tooth removal, implant placement, jaw surgery, biopsies, treatment of oral lesions and jaw injuries, and TMJ surgery. Core Dental dentists explain whether referral suits your situation.

Can I get my wisdom teeth out at Core Dental?

Wisdom tooth extraction is part of Core Dental's general dentistry, and our dentists assess your teeth and imaging first. Where teeth are impacted or complex, we may refer you to a specialist oral surgeon.

How much does specialist oral surgery cost through Core Dental?

Fees are set by the treating specialist and depend on the procedure, setting and anaesthetic, so ask for a written quote. Core Dental quotes its own dental treatment before it starts and offers interest-free Payright plans as at September 2026.

How do I book a Core Dental oral surgery consultation?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online through your preferred practice page. Our dentist will examine you, explain your options and arrange a referral to a partnering specialist if you need one.