



Paresthesia Nerve Damage From Wisdom Teeth Removal

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While some patients may be at high risk for paresthesia, other patients will not be at risk for this complication. Why is that? Every individual has a unique anatomy. The way that a person's roots are in relationship to the nerves and other risk factors associated with the patient's anatomy will determine whether that person is at risk for paresthesia.

What are some things we can do to minimize any potential complications? Or, if you have already had your wisdom teeth removed and are experiencing paresthesia, what can we do to reduce the numbness of your lip, chin, or tongue?

First and foremost, if a patient is at a high risk for paresthesia, we prescribe anti-inflammatory steroids for the patient to start the day prior to their procedure. These steroids will significantly reduce inflammation experienced after the procedure. Essentially, inflammation of the nerve is what causes paresthesia, so it is important to reduce that inflammation and steroids are an excellent way to help prevent that or help address it when a patient has experienced numbness.

Another medication that can help is ibuprofen or Aleve, otherwise known as NSAIDS. The reason that we use these is that they are very effective in regards to helping reduce that inflammation. To help reduce the inflammation that is causing numbness and/or pain, we recommend that the patient take these medications as prescribed. Another technique to reduce inflammation and swelling is to ice the area consistently for a few days after the procedure. This definitely helps reduce inflammation and the swelling that occurs in the nerve due to potential nerve damage.

However, the most important technique that also exists is TIME. The inferior alveolar nerve is a sensory nerve and this is the nerve that was inflamed from the procedure. It took approximately six months to really get that innervation back. To reiterate, the most important thing is to give it time to heal. In nearly all cases, the paresthesia is temporary. Given enough time for healing, it is highly likely that paresthesia symptoms will resolve on its own.

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