

Benefits Spotlight

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Q&A with Dr. Jeff: What to expect during a tooth extraction

A dental extraction is a procedure that involves the removal of one or more teeth. If you are facing a tooth extraction, this Q&A with Dr. Jeffrey Chaffin, Chief Dental Officer at Delta Dental of Iowa, will help you prepare for what's to come.

Q: What are the different types of dental extractions?

Dr. Chaffin: Extractions, or the removal of teeth, can be broadly categorized as either simple or surgical.

A simple extraction is straightforward without any expected complications. In a simple extraction, the tooth is fully erupted (visible outside of the gum) into the mouth and can be removed easily. Normally, there are no stitches placed after the tooth removal.

A surgical extraction is needed when the removal of the tooth is more complex. Sometimes, the tooth is not fully erupted into the mouth and the gum tissue must be turned back. In some cases, the surrounding bone may need to be removed to allow the removal of the tooth. Sometimes, surgical extractions may involve sectioning the tooth into multiple pieces to allow for removal. Another type of surgical extraction involves a broken down tooth. Surgical extractions normally involve stitches after the surgery to allow better healing.

Q: What can I expect during the extraction itself?

Dr. Chaffin: Whether a simple or surgical extraction, the dental provider will ensure that you are comfortable. Teeth can be removed with local anesthesia, which is an injection in the area the tooth is being removed. When there are multiple teeth to be removed, or the surgery is more complex, the surgeon will often recommend a deeper sedation, like intravenous (IV) sedation. For this type of sedation, you are put to "sleep" with medicine placed in the IV.

For more severe cases, general anesthesia may be an option. With general anesthesia, you are not conscious, and it is a deeper "sleep." The anesthesia options are largely up to you, but the type of anesthesia used may be decided by the complexity of the extractions as well. Talk to your dentist about what is the best option for you.

Q: What should I expect in terms of recovery time?

Dr. Chaffin: Recovery time from an extraction can vary depending on how many teeth were removed and the complexity. In general, most patients need to change their diet for 7-10 days, with full healing of the dental socket (extraction site) taking about 3 weeks.

Q: What are the best ways to care for the extraction site to ensure proper healing and lower the risk of complications?

Dr. Chaffin: The surgeon will provide detailed recovery instructions, which you should closely follow. Immediate pain relief with a prescription or over-the-counter pain reliever will be offered. Antibiotics are normally not necessary for a dental extraction, but they could be prescribed when an infection was a reason for the tooth removal in the first place.

You should take it easy for a few days with no heavy activity and drink plenty of water. A diet of soft foods is recommended for a few days, and you should avoid things like smoking, drinking through a straw and swishing liquids throughout your mouth.

Q: Are there potential risks or complications associated with tooth extractions?

Dr. Chaffin: A blood clot will form in the extraction site, which is important to help the site heal. You will want to avoid doing things that may irritate or dislodge that clot, as it will delay the healing and can also be painful. If the clot is lost early, the bone can be exposed — that is called a dry socket. Smoking is a big risk factor in developing a dry socket.

Q: What signs should I watch for that might mean potential problems?

Dr. Chaffin: In rare cases, severe pain and infection are two things that can happen after an extraction. If you have excessive pain, have a fever or see pus oozing in the surgical area, contact your doctor right away.

DeltaLife™: Empowering your workforce with financial security

Attracting and retaining a top workforce goes beyond offering competitive salaries. Businesses now recognize the value of offering comprehensive benefits packages that support the well-being of their employees both on and off the clock.

Understanding this need, [Delta Dental of Iowa launched DeltaLife](#), a new life and disability insurance offering designed to protect your workforce during life's challenging moments.

Closing a gap in employee benefits

According to the Council for Disability Awareness, 51 million working American adults lack adequate disability coverage.¹ This can lead to severe financial hardship if they're unexpectedly unable to work due to illness or injury. Additionally, unexpected life events can significantly impact an employee's wellness and financial stability.

DeltaLife bridges this gap by offering affordable and flexible solutions for both employers and employees. Through a partnership with OneAmerica®, a reputable insurance company with over 145 years of experience, DeltaLife provides your employees access to several insurance options:

- *Life insurance:* This helps protect an employee's finances while they're alive and provides valuable support for their loved ones in the event of their death.
- *Short-term disability insurance:* This replaces a portion of an employee's income if they are unable to work for a period due to illness, injury or childbirth.
- *Long-term disability insurance:* This provides financial coverage for employees who are unable to work for an extended period due to a covered disability.
- *One lump sum disability insurance:* This offers supplemental income to help cover disability-related expenses like medical bills and home modifications.

DeltaLife: Tailored solutions for your business

DeltaLife offers flexible plans for both small businesses and larger employer groups. This includes voluntary and employer-paid options, allowing you to customize the program to fit your budget and employee preferences.

Additional benefits of DeltaLife include:

- *Competitive cost:* DeltaLife offers standard and preferred rates for businesses with as few as two employees.
- *Underwritten plans:* For businesses with 20 or more employees, DeltaLife offers simplified underwriting options.
- *Convenient online claims submission*
- *Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Travel Assistance services are also available.*

Investing in the well-being of your employees

When it comes to overall wellness, it's not just about having a healthy body — it's also about stress management and financial stability. As an employer, crafting a benefits package that encompasses all facets of well-being is a solid strategy to attract and keep top talent.

Boosting your benefit offerings to include life and disability insurance through DeltaLife shows your commitment to the overall well-being of your employees. Visit our website or contact your broker or Delta Dental of Iowa account manager today to learn more about how you can empower your workforce with financial security and peace of mind.

REFERENCE:

[Council for Disability Awareness](#)