

Hypodontia

What is hypodontia?

Hypodontia means you did not grow one or more of your teeth. Your dentist will tell you if you have hypodontia.

You might:

- have noticed gaps between your teeth
- still have some of your baby teeth
- have small or pointy teeth

For many people, hypodontia does not cause any concerns. Some people do not like the spaces made by missing teeth, especially if the front teeth are affected.

A dental examination and X-ray are needed to confirm the diagnosis of hypodontia.



Image to show hypodontia

Causes

Hypodontia can occur for no known reason.

It can run in families, but people who have hypodontia do not always pass it on to their children. It can sometimes be seen as part of another condition.

Having treatment

Treatment can sometimes be carried out by your family dentist. If specialist help is needed, treatment will be carried out in a hospital.

The hypodontia team at Queen Victoria Hospital can talk to you about the options and where your treatment can be done.

Treatments

Treatment for hypodontia often involves a team of specialist dentists to move teeth with braces, and replace missing teeth.

Braces

Braces help to move teeth. They can either close space between your teeth, or create space to be filled with a replacement tooth.

Replacing teeth

Missing teeth can be replaced with dentures, bridges or dental implants.

- A denture is a false tooth that can be removed.
- A bridge is a false tooth fixed to the natural tooth next to the space.
- A dental implant is a metal screw placed in your jaw bone. These are used to hold replacement teeth in the mouth. An implant is not suitable if you are still growing.

Your dental team can give you more information about dentures, bridges and dental implants.

If you have small or pointy teeth

Tooth coloured fillings can be added to small or pointy teeth to reshape them.

Before tooth reshaping



After tooth reshaping



After treatment

After treatment, you will return to your own dentist for ongoing care. The hypodontia team cannot carry out life-long follow-up care.

The dental team

There are several types of dentist who may care for you during your treatment.

General dental practitioner

Family dentists help to keep your teeth healthy, and you will need to see them regularly.

Paediatric dentist

Help to look after your teeth until you are 16 years old.

Orthodontist

Monitor growth and development of your jaws and teeth. They use braces to move your teeth.

Oral surgeon

Specialise in taking out teeth and placing dental implants.

Restorative dentist

Help to replace your missing teeth with denture, bridges or dental implants.

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