

OVER-RETAINED BABY TEETH

“Shark Teeth” or “Double Row of Teeth”



An adult tooth growing behind a baby tooth is a **very** common occurrence. Most baby teeth will eventually fall out on their own without any intervention (extraction). Once your child has most of their adult front teeth (on average 8-9 years of age), we will assess if they need to be evaluated by the orthodontist as this is usually a sign of tooth crowding.

Children usually lose their first teeth between the ages of 5 to 7. When an adult tooth erupts (grows in) directly underneath a baby tooth, it resorbs (dissolves) the root of the baby tooth causing it to loosen and fall out. It commonly occurs in the lower and upper front teeth but can happen anywhere in the mouth.

Once the baby tooth is out, the adult tooth will naturally move forward into the correct position. Children with extensive crowding may not have room for the adult teeth to completely move forward and may need an orthodontic consultation in the future. If the baby tooth is “wiggly”:

1. Encourage your child to “wiggle” out the baby tooth on his/her own.
2. If it does not fall out within a few weeks (up to a month), please make an appointment with the dentist to evaluate the tooth for an extraction.
3. If you are worried and do not wish to wait, we are always happy to see your child to evaluate this area. However, most parents wish to wait on coming in to avoid the time and expense of an exam.

An over-retained baby tooth is not an urgent condition, but we would like you to call for an appointment if one of the following occurs:

1. Your child has pain or discomfort.
2. Brushing/flossing in this area is painful.
3. There is gum swelling, any sign of an infection (this is very rare).
4. A TOP front adult tooth is growing behind the baby tooth. This requires an extraction earlier on to prevent an orthodontic problem called a crossbite.

Should you have any questions, please call us: 905-709-3888