

Dentistry — Referral to Oral Surgery for an Impacted Wisdom Tooth

THE CASE NOTES

Patient: Mr Liam Foster, 24 years old, student

Presenting complaint: Three episodes of pain and swelling around the lower left wisdom tooth in 6 months

Examination: Partially erupted lower left third molar; overlying gum inflamed (pericoronitis); tender, limited mouth opening during episodes

Radiograph: OPG: mesioangular impaction of lower left third molar; close relationship to the inferior alveolar nerve canal

Treatment to date: Two courses of antibiotics and oral hygiene measures; symptoms recur

Medical history: Fit and well; no allergies; non-smoker

Dental history: Otherwise good oral health; regular attender; no other active disease

Task: Write a referral letter to Mr Awan, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon, requesting assessment for surgical removal of the impacted tooth.

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WHAT TO INCLUDE

- + **Recurrent pericoronitis and the number of episodes**
The recurrence is the clinical justification for surgical referral rather than continued conservative care.
- + **The radiographic impaction and proximity to the nerve**
Decision-critical: it shapes the surgical risk assessment and consent the recipient must plan for.
- + **Failed antibiotics and hygiene measures**
Shows conservative management has been exhausted, which is the reason for escalation.

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

- **General good oral health and regular attendance**
Reassuring but not decision-relevant to the extraction; a brief mention at most, not a paragraph.
- **Student status**
Background colour with no bearing on the surgical referral.

CRITERION IN FOCUS - CONTENT

Dental referrals are graded on whether you select the findings that justify surgery — the recurrence and the radiographic relationship to the nerve. Omitting the nerve proximity, or padding with unrelated dental history, both cost Content marks.

Write this letter, then get it marked at oetwritingcorrection.com/oet-writing-services