

## Dental Surgery: A Case Considered

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I recall that in my father's time, (b 1928) they used ether in the demist office. He reported that it was like going on a long trip travelling here and there. (Incidentally he reported the same thing when on morphine for a broken hip recovery).

Her and my mother made sure that our teeth were looked after. It was expensive in the 1970's and 1980's to get a cleaning and a filling. My sister and I concluded that our dentist did dental work that wasn't at all necessary. He will drill molars after an excreting local anastatic in the roof of the mouth even when there were no cavities. She and I came to the same conclusion after we switched demist. Our new demist rarely did a cavity filling. Of course, the needles were much more benign in the 1990's. You just fill a little pinch. It made going to the demist a lot easier. In fact, going to the dentist in the 1970's and 80's made me depressed I realize now. Better to go to a busy practice. We got soaked as one of his few patients.

At 21 or 22, I was scheduled to get my wisdom teeth removed. I didn't show up for the inhouse surgery. My wisdom teeth were fine except I stopped brushing after being told to keep doing what I was doing which was to do no brushing. The neglect complied over the years. I always swore to give up Coke and Coffee after a good cleaning.

I stopped going to cleanings because I couldn't afford the dentist. I had no dental plan and no work. Interesting the Canadian New Democratic Party government wants to bring in dental care to match Medicare: paid for by the government. If your teeth are not part of you r health, what are they?

I always had lovely teeth. However, at age 45, I went to the community mail box I fell on the 6 inches thick of ice in front of the box. I landed on my jaw. I weigh 240 lbs. I had hairline cracked all my teeth simply because those responsible for plowing didn't do their job.

I put in an insurance claim with Canada Post. An insurance agent took a statement. Later, he refused to pay any insurance. He called my fall an "alleged slip and fall". Talk about a conflict of interest. I had taken a photograph of the ice in front of the box. I forgot to show it to him. Insurance agents are a crooked as Lawyers.

So, a bit later, I took 18 large pieces of tooth from my mouth. My teeth had fallen apart. It was because they were hairline cracked from the fall landing all my weight on my jaw.

So, I had to get the remainder of my teeth extracted. I went to the dental surgeon-the only one in a city of 125k. We scheduled a surgery. I went to St. Joseph's Hospital. The dental surgeon had decades

of experience. The surgery was scheduled for about 1 hour to get all my teeth removed.

After signing the paperwork, they rolled me to the waiting area. The nurse asked me if I was afraid. I said "no." It was my first surgery. It was cold in the Surgery room. I suspected it was to keep the germs down and the capillaries small. It was a bit of a maneuver getting from the gurney to the surgery table. I was surprised that the table was so small and narrow.

The anaesthesiologist looked concerned. Not sure why. He asked me if I was ready. I said yes. As he was about to put the mask over my nose and mouth, I had a moment of doubt. He told me to count from 10 backwards. I knew that I'd be out by number 8. I was. I accepted it without incident. I didn't know at the time that young people can die from such a surgery. I took a breath or two and was out like a light. When I woke up, I was in recovery with one nurse. I don't recall dreaming anything. I don't recall saying anything as I came out of the anaesthesia. She did say I had high blood pressure. There would have been a lot of rough maneuvering in getting all my teeth out.

I recovered quickly. I had a ride from a friend (Greg has been good to me). My next stop was the dentist. I would have liked to have gotten implants but at \$5000 they are too expensive. I'm told by my cousin that they cause headaches anyway. Living with dentures seems an antiquated, old technology. I have no other choice. I'm glad to live in Canada; otherwise, I would not be able to pay for the medical procedure. The insurance would have been a great help. You need to be a lawyer to function in this world. I turned down and dried other claims for other accidents.

Losing my teeth was a major blow in my entire life. My father, who lost his teeth at about age 50 always told me to look after my teeth or it will all be on your mind when you're his age. He was right. I wish I could have kept my teeth. Really the technology of teeth science is in the dark ages still. I'm told by someone who researched it that the implants can cause unexplained headaches. There are presently 2 million complaints. Why not treat the tooth material? We should be able to do that now. One third of scientist work in materials. If a scientist wants to be rich, find a way to regrow teeth or to treat with knowledge of material science. A dental assistant said that we need a new set of teeth at age 40. She was right!