



## Temporary Pain Management (Non-urgent)

Due to the recent outbreak of Covid-19, Dental Practices are opening an emergency only service. Emergencies include severe pain and swelling. However, if you are in the vulnerable category (aged over 70, pregnant or have underlying health problems), we would advise you to follow the recommendation of social distancing and avoid going to a Dental Practice. Especially if you have any symptoms such as a new continuous cough or a fever, you should self-isolate.

### So what if you have toothache and you are in self-isolation?

If a tooth has decay, this is the result of a bacterial infection. If the tooth is sensitive to temperature or sweet food and drinks, antibiotics will not fix this. The decay needs to be removed to allow the tooth to heal.

However, if the bacteria have caused irreversible nerve damage in the tooth then a filling will not solve the problem. The treatment required would be either a root filling or the tooth would need to be extracted.

### There are a few things you can do to manage toothache without going to the Dentist:

- If you can see there is a cavity in the tooth, a temporary filling can be placed into this space. Temporary filling kits are available from most supermarkets or pharmacies.
- Anti-inflammatory medications can reduce sensitivity. A combination of ibuprofen and paracetamol has been found to be beneficial if you can take them both - **however**, it has been reported that Ibuprofen may increase the symptoms of COVID-19 so taking paracetamol alone is probably best. Ensure you read the instructions and follow the recommended doses.
- Keep taking pain relief even if the symptoms seem to be improving as they are likely to come back once you stop taking them.
- Desensitizing toothpaste can be used as a topical paste as well as for brushing. Colgate sensitive pro-relief and Sensodyne repair and protect, are a couple of recommended brands.
- Anesthetic gel can be applied to the area to numb the gum and relieve discomfort. Orajel can be purchased from most supermarkets and pharmacies.
- Clove Oil - This can be found in pharmacies and health food stores such as Holland & Barrett. You can apply it onto the painful tooth with a cotton bud. This can help reduce discomfort if there is an exposed nerve by placing it over the area.



-Keeping your head elevated at night can help relieve the pressure in a tooth. Using an extra pillow at night can help to do this.

-Keeping the area cold can help reduce the inflammation in the area which can help reduce the pain and discomfort. If the tooth is sensitive, do not place anything cold directly on the tooth but using cold packs externally on the face can help.

### **Infection is most likely if there is swelling or pus discharging.**

Mouth rinses such as warm salty mouthwash can help draw out the infection. Dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water and rinse over the affected area. You will need to repeat this several times a day.

Do not put anything hot externally on the face as this can make the infection worse.

### **Gum Pain**

Food/debris trapping between the gums can cause gum discomfort and inflammation due to bacteria.

Make sure the area is cleaned thoroughly and use interdental aids such as floss or TePe interdental brushes.

You could use corsodyl gel on a brush to help clean the area and use corsodyl mouth rinse however corsodyl can stain teeth so should not be used for long term periods.

### **Pain from Ulcers**

Mouth ulcers can be caused by trauma but also can be a sign of underlying medical issues such as iron deficiency so shouldn't be ignored. If a mouth ulcer doesn't heal within two weeks it should be checked by a dentist.

To reduce the discomfort there are different types of topical gels you can place over the area such as Gengigel, Bonjela, Iglu and some anesthetic gels (Orajel)

### **Broken teeth**

If a tooth is chipped or broken this can cause sensitivity aswell as being sharp to the tongue.

As mentioned before, using a desensitizing toothpaste can help to reduce sensitivity and using a temporary filling material to cover the edges where the tooth may be rough or sharp.