



Gloucestershire Health and Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Advice for Managing Dental Problems At Home



**Gloucestershire Community
Dental Service**
Tel: 0300 421 6440



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Dental Treatment and Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Our guidance from the Government and our Chief Dental Officer is to:

- STOP all routine, non-urgent dental care
- Provide telephone triage for patients with urgent dental needs during normal working hours.

This is to ensure we are not risking transmission of the COVID-19 virus to patients and staff. It will also help prevent unnecessary travel, in line with government guidance.

If you have severe toothache, a large swelling of your face, bleeding that won't stop or you have suffered an injury to your face or mouth, please call us on 0300 421 6440 for further advice.



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Why routine dental treatments are not available:

- Dental check-ups and treatments involve close contact between dentist and patients and so should not take place
- Dentists have to avoid using tools like the drills, to prevent them from catching the virus from an infected patient and passing it onto other patients
- Drills and other high-speed tools create a 'spray' for the patients' mouth so dentists need to use special protective clothing and equipment
- This personal protective equipment is currently required in hospitals treating coronavirus patients.
- Without this proper equipment dentists and nurses are not safe to treat patients as normal





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For more information about why
we can't see you at this time
please scan the QR code below.



bda.org/coronavirus

Or visit: <https://bda.org/advice/coronavirus/pages/patients.aspx>



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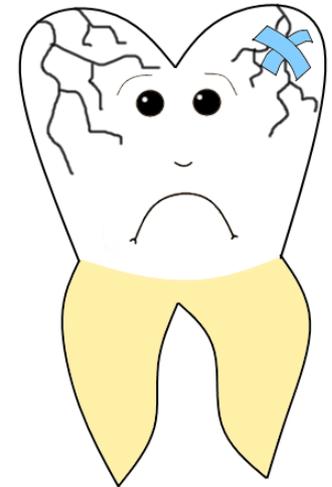
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Toothache and Dental Pain

Decay in a tooth can cause a cavity. The cavity can irritate the nerve and cause pain. If you find you are unable to manage the pain at home, please contact us.

To help manage the pain at home, we recommend:

- **Pain Relief** – paracetamol and/or ibuprofen depending on what you are able to take (see next slide)
- **Sensitive Toothpaste** (e.g. Sensodyne) can help, you can rub the toothpaste directly onto the affected area
- **Temporary filling kits** can temporarily repair the cavity and provide some pain relief.
- **Sleeping on an extra pillow** to help elevate your head.
- **Cold compress** (e.g. an ice pack wrapped in a tea towel) held on the cheek on the affected side.
- **Good toothbrushing and avoiding sugary food and drinks.** This will help stop the decay getting worse.



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Pain Relieving Medication

If you are having dental pain, we may advise you to take pain relief.

Paracetamol and ibuprofen are helpful treating dental pain.

If you are unsure if you can take paracetamol or ibuprofen, please contact your pharmacist for further advice.

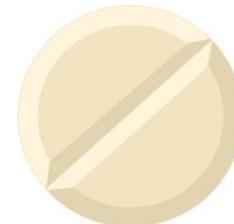
For example, you can not take ibuprofen if you have certain medical conditions (e.g. stomach ulcers or asthma) or if you are taking certain medications (e.g. warfarin or other blood thinners).

Do not take more than the recommended dose for your age. This will **not** help the pain more and may cause life-threatening liver failure.

Do not take paracetamol and co-codamol together as they both contain paracetamol and taking both can lead to overdose.

Do not take ibuprofen if you have COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19.

If you are concerned you have taken too many painkilling tablets, please contact us.





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Bleeding

Bleeding Inside Your Mouth

e.g. following a recent tooth extraction.

If this happens:

- Sit upright if possible.
- Bite firmly on rolled up gauze or a clean handkerchief for 20 minutes.

If the bleeding is continuing or you take blood thinners, please contact us urgently.

Bleeding Gums

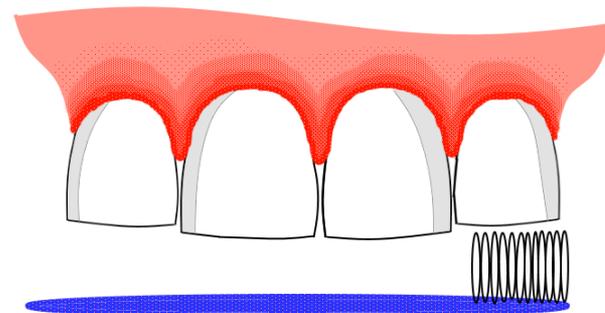
Bleeding gums is **not a dental emergency**.

Bleeding gums may be caused by plaque left around the gums.

Brush twice a day for two minutes, concentrate especially on the areas that are bleeding.

If you can, floss between the teeth or use interdental brushes between the teeth (e.g. Tepe brushes).

This should stop bleeding gums, if you have concerns, please contact us.





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Swelling

Is the swelling:

- Causing difficulty breathing?
- Making it difficult for you to move your tongue?
- Closing your eye?
- Getting worse quickly?
- Making you feel unwell, e.g. fever?
- Making it difficult to open your mouth two fingers wide?

IF YES, CONTACT US URGENTLY.



If you have any other swelling inside or outside of your mouth and you are concerned, please contact us for advice.





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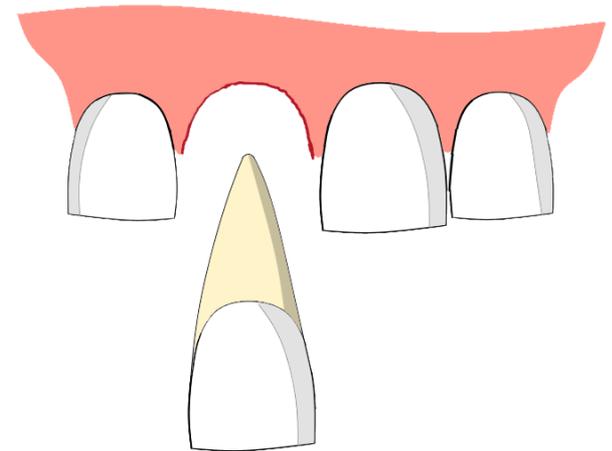
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Avulsed Tooth (Knocked Out Tooth)

DO NOT try and put a baby tooth back in.

If you have had an adult tooth knocked out:

1. Find the tooth, and **PICK IT** up by the crown and only hold it by the crown and not by the root.
2. Clean the mouth by rinsing with water.
3. If the tooth is dirty, get the person to **LICK IT** clean or pour water over it – **DO NOT** scrub the tooth.
4. **STICK IT** back into position.
5. Bite down on a handkerchief or a tissue.
6. Contact us for further advice.





Trauma (Injury) to the Teeth

Has the injury caused:

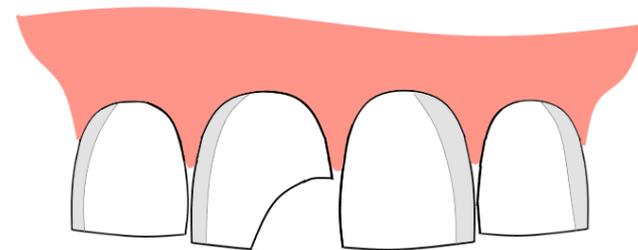
- Head injury?
- Loss of consciousness?
- Significant facial injury?
- Uncontrolled bleeding?
- Difficulty breathing?
- Difficulty biting teeth together the same way as before the injury?
- Large cuts, a split lip or cuts across the tongue?
- Inhalation of a tooth or piece of tooth?

**IF YES, CONTACT 111
IMMEDIATELY**

If there are **small cuts** inside the mouth (less than 1cm), keep your mouth really clean and these should heal.

If a **small piece of a tooth has broken**, use sensitive toothpaste to help stop sensitivity. We can try to repair the tooth when we are able to see patients in clinic again.

If a **large piece of tooth has broken**, contact us immediately for advice.





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Lost Filling or Crown

Lost Filling

- This is **not a dental emergency** and we are unable to see you for this currently.
- If there is pain from the tooth, please follow our advice for dental pain and pain relief.
- You could try a temporary filling kit which you can purchase from pharmacies and supermarkets. This will help with any sharp edges and stop food getting stuck in the hole.
- When we are able to see patients again in clinic, we can look at placing a new filling for you or planning further treatment.

Lost Crown

- This is **not a dental emergency** and we are unable to see you for this currently.
- If there is pain from the tooth, please follow our advice for dental pain and pain relief.
- Keep the crown safe as we may be able to put the old crown back on the tooth if it is fitting well.
- **DO NOT** use superglue to put the crown back on with.
- When we are able to see patients again in clinic, we can look at addressing the problem for you or planning further treatment.





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Mouth Ulcers

Ulcers inside the mouth can be sore and uncomfortable, but the majority will heal within two weeks.

To help with the discomfort you can try rinsing with warm salty water. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ a teaspoon of salt to a cup of warm water and rinse this around your mouth before spitting out.

If the ulcer is caused by a denture, leave the denture out as much as possible until the ulcer has healed.

If there has been a mouth ulcer present for over three weeks, please contact us urgently.



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Sensitive Teeth

Teeth can become sensitive for many reasons, e.g. receding gums and exposed tooth root or acid wear of teeth.

Try the following to ease sensitivity at home:

- **Sensitive Toothpaste** e.g. Sensodyne. Brush with this twice daily, remembering to spit and not rinse after brushing. If there is a tooth that is particularly sensitive, you could rub some toothpaste onto this tooth also.
- **Avoid acidic food and drinks.** Avoid fizzy drinks, citrus fruits, fruit juices and alcoholic beverages. Acidic food and drinks can cause sensitivity and also stop sensitive toothpastes from working.
- **Avoid very cold food and drinks.** Cold food and drinks can make cause bad sensitivity.

If you do not find this advice has helped the sensitivity, please contact us for further advice. Occasionally sensitivity can be the sign of decay or a crack in a tooth.

