



Dental Network

Coronavirus Pandemic – Dental Update

Many of our clinics are now open and able to offer 'face to face' patient appointments.

For up to date information about Coronavirus please visit the following websites:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

During the current situation it means that avoiding dental problems has never been more important.

Can we remind all of our patients and their carers or parents about the following:

- Brush teeth twice per day with a high Fluoride toothpaste (1450 ppm of Fluoride)
- Try and brush for at least two minutes in all parts of the mouth.
- After brushing spit out but do not rinse with water.
- If you normally receive a prescription for high fluoride toothpaste please be aware that at the moment we are not issuing further prescriptions in order to ease the pressure on pharmacies. However, this may change.

In lockdown or social isolation it is important not to eat sugary foods frequently. This includes putting sugar in tea or coffee as well as eating chocolate, sweets and biscuits. An increase in eating these foods can have a disastrous effect on oral health causing existing cavities to get worse or create new ones.

Please see the short video 'Looking after your family and your smiles' below produced by the British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry

<http://www.bascd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/BASCD-COVID-V4-3MAY.mp4>

For more information about oral health please visit please visit Oral Health Foundation website <https://www.dentalhealth.org/>

The following information will help you understand where to access care if you have any dental problems, and support you in managing minor symptoms at home. Please contact for us for advice we are here to help you.

Dental Problems

Dental problems can be thought of in three groups:

1. Routine/Non Urgent
2. Urgent.
3. Emergency.

1. Routine/Non Urgent

Please contact us for further advice.

- Bleeding gums
- Broken, lose or lost fillings
- Chipped teeth with no pain
- Broken, rubbing or loose dentures
- Loose or lost crowns, bridges or veneers.

2. Urgent

Contact us for advice, and initial telephone consultation with a dentist.

- Facial swelling extending to eye or neck.
- Bleeding following an extraction that does not stop after 20 mins solid pressure with gauze/clean hankie. A small amount of oozing is normal, just like if you had a grazed knee.
- Bleeding due to trauma
- Trauma resulting in a tooth being knocked out of the socket, or a large fracture resulting from trauma and causing severe pain.
- Significant toothache preventing sleep or eating, associated with significant swelling, or fever that cannot be managed with painkillers.

3. Call 999 or attend your local Accident and Emergency department.

- Facial swelling affecting vision or breathing preventing mouth opening more than 2 fingers width.
- Trauma causing loss of consciousness, double vision or vomiting.

For more information about dental problems please visit

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/toothache/>

Here is a link to a short information video about how to access NHS dental care in England during Coronavirus pandemic produced by the British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry

<http://www.bascd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/England-revised.mp4>

Advice about managing dental problems

Pain

In the first instance we advise paracetamol unless this is not a suitable option for you.

Medicines like Ibuprofen, unless this is not a suitable option for you, can help control pain as well. Combining the two has also been shown to be effective.

Always read the patient information when taking over-the-counter medicines, such as ibuprofen and paracetamol, and follow the instructions on how to take the medicines.

Taking too many tablets will not improve your symptoms and can cause serious stomach and liver injury which can be life threatening.

Toothache

If the tooth is extremely sensitive to hot or cold, this may be a sign of decay. The following home care measures may help assist with pain management until you can see a dentist:

- Good cleaning with fluoride toothpaste and reducing sugar intake will help stop decay from getting any worse.
- If there is a hole in the tooth, or the tooth has cracked and is now sensitive, a temporary filling material can be packed into the space to help make symptoms more manageable. These are widely available both online and from supermarkets or pharmacies.
- Toothpaste aimed at reducing tooth sensitivity, such as 'Sensodyne Repair and Protect', may also help reduce pain. Rub the toothpaste directly on to the affected area and do not rinse. Anaesthetic gel such as 'Orajel' can also help ease the pain.
- If the pain is severe, rinsing with cold water can sometimes ease the pain whilst you are waiting to be assessed by a dentist.

Wisdom Teeth

Wisdom tooth pain is usually due to inflammation of the gum over the tooth, which is often made worse by biting; introducing a soft food diet will help with the pain.

Most flare-ups can be managed with good home care and should settle within in a few days to a week.

Using a product such as 'Corsodyl' mouthwash will help with alleviating pain but avoid using for longer than a week. Warm salty mouthwashes can also help with alleviating pain.

If you have difficulty swallowing, swelling in your face or cheek or difficulty opening your mouth you should contact us or your own dentist if you have been referred.

Mouth Ulcers

Although painful, most mouth ulcers will heal within 7-10 days and are not serious.

However, a non-healing ulcers/oral lesions present for more than 2 weeks may be a sign of a more serious condition. Please contact us for guidance if required; otherwise follow the home measures described below:

- Warm salty mouth washes- Do not swallow though.
- Good oral hygiene even if it is painful to brush, the area must be kept clean to encourage healing.
- 'Difflam' or 'Corsodyl' spray or mouthwash may be useful
- Soft diet - soft food will reduce trauma from biting
- Painkillers - paracetamol or ibuprofen- do not exceed the recommended dose.
- Rubbing Dentures - Denture adhesives like 'Poligrip' or 'Fixoden' may help secure a loose denture. Remove dentures when possible if causing trauma

Pain or bleeding, after an extraction.

Some oozing is normal after a tooth extraction. If the socket is bleeding freely, bite hard on gauze or a clean hankie for 20 minutes. If bleeding still doesn't stop, please contact us.

Continue to take regular painkillers for several days after an extraction if necessary.

However, if you smoke or rinse too soon after an extraction you risk an infection called a dry socket. This can be very painful. You should contact us for advice if you think this has happened to you.

Gums

Bleeding from gums is not a dental emergency. Bleeding gums can be due to gum disease

Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste for 2 minutes. Remember to also use floss or interdental brushes to clean between your teeth every day.

If your gums are extremely painful and look infected (bright red with a grey/green appearance) you should still try your best to brush them even though they will bleed.

Take painkillers as required and use mouthwashes such as 'Corsodyl' which can be purchased from your pharmacist.

Fractured or knocked out teeth

If a tooth has been chipped and is sensitive and/or sharp then applying sensitive toothpaste or using an emergency repair kit is advised.

If a baby tooth has been knocked out, do not attempt to put it back in. Clean the area, bite on a clean hankie or towel for 20 minutes if it is bleeding, give the child age appropriate pain relief medicine and keep to a soft diet until the area has healed.

If an adult tooth has been knocked out:

- Keep calm
- Find the tooth and pick it up by the crown (the white part). Avoid touching the root.
- If the tooth is dirty, wash it briefly (10 seconds) under cold running water and reposition it. Try to encourage the patient / parent to replant the tooth. Bite on a handkerchief to hold it in position.
- If this is not possible, place the tooth in a glass of milk or saline if available). The tooth can also be transported in the mouth, keeping it between the back teeth and the inside of the cheek. If the patient is very young, he/she could swallow the tooth- therefore it is advisable to get the patient to spit in a container and place the tooth in it. Avoid storage in water!
- Seek emergency dental treatment.

Further information is available here:

<https://www.iadt-dentaltrauma.org/for-patients.html>

For more information about mouth problems please visit

<https://www.dentalhealth.org/Pages/Category/conditions-and-diseases?Take=16>