

Pain/swelling

Toothache can be very distressful and usually starts suddenly. It can vary from mild discomfort to a severe throbbing, which is often worse at night. The area of your jaw close to the infected tooth may also be sore and tender to the touch.

Toothache can either come and go or be constant. Eating or drinking can make the pain worse, particularly if the food or drink is hot or cold.

If you have dental pain for longer than one or two days, you should visit your dentist as soon as possible to have it treated. The longer you leave it, the worse it will get and the more likely you will get swelling.

What you can do while you wait for your appointment.

Take painkillers such as ibuprofen or paracetamol. Using sensitive toothpastes such as sensodyne may also help.

Looking after your dental health is the best way to prevent toothache.

To do this you should brush your teeth twice a day using a toothpaste that contains fluoride; gently brush your gums and tongue as well
clean between your teeth regularly using interdental aids such as floss, Tepe brushes and Airflossers.

Fluoride mouthwashes may be used if necessary.

limit your intake of sugary foods and drinks; you should have them as an occasional treat and only at mealtimes

do not smoke as it can make some dental problems worse

Visit your dentist and hygienist regularly to catch decay and gum problems early.