



## PAEDIATRIC ACUTE CARE GUIDELINE

### Dental - Toothache

<b>Scope (Staff):</b>	All Emergency Department Clinicians
<b>Scope (Area):</b>	Emergency Department

This document should be read in conjunction with this DISCLAIMER  
<http://kidshealthwa.com/about/disclaimer/>

## Dental - Toothache

### Background

Patients presenting with severe toothache associated with indicators of infection, including:

- Gum swelling
- Obvious abscess
- Recent antibiotics for same problem
- Woken from sleep by dental pain
- Severe pain not relieved by simple analgesia
- Recent unsuccessful attempt to manage the same problem
- Pyrexia and/or malaise
- Facial swelling

require expedient treatment, often involving antibiotic prescription and may require admission. The Dental Department or on-call Dentist must be contacted for these cases.

Patients with intermittent toothache not associated with the above signs of acute infection should be referred to an appropriate dental provider for non-emergency dental management.

- Please see [Dental Services External to the Children's Hospital](#) for contact details of appropriate dental service providers.

# Management

## Child presents with toothache

Does the child present with indicators of infection?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever</li> <li>• Facial swelling</li> <li>• Gum swelling</li> <li>• Obvious abscess</li> <li>• Severe pain not relieved by simple analgesia               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woken from sleep by dental pain</li> <li>• Recent antibiotics for same problem</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recent unsuccessful attempt to manage same problem</li> </ul>	
YES	NO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History and examination</li> <li>• Contact dental department during office hours               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ After hours contact on call dentist</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Analgesia</li> <li>• EMLA®</li> <li>• NBM</li> <li>• Consider OPG (discuss with ED consultant or dentist)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide appropriate analgesia</li> <li>• Refer to the appropriate dental provider:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Private General Dentist (Family Dentist)</li> <li>◦ Specialist Paediatric Dentist</li> <li>◦ School Dental Clinic</li> <li>◦ Metropolitan Dental Clinic</li> <li>◦ Oral Health Centre of WA</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">Dental Services External to the Children's Hospital</a> for contact details of appropriate dental service providers.</p>




## Tags

abscess, dental, dentist, facial swelling, gum, opg, oral, teeth, tooth, toothache

References
<b>External Review</b> Dr Rodney Jennings, PMH Dental Health Service. February 2015

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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