



# Got a tooth ache or problem?



## Dentists can start to offer face-to-face appointments from 8 June.

Dental check-ups and treatment involve close contact between the dentist and patient. Dentists and their teams have to avoid using tools like drills, as they create a lot of 'spray' from patients' mouths and this increases the risk of them catching the virus from an infected patient and passing it on to others. For safety, dental staff need to have the right personal protective equipment (PPE) and only carry out treatments that have been risk assessed as safe. You may only be able to get urgent dental treatment at one of the centres equipped to offer this.

The following guide helps to understand what may be seen as urgent:



### What counts as a dental emergency?

#### Urgent dental treatment:

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

#### Straight to A&E:

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

#### Non-Urgent (may need to wait):

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

## What to do if I have a tooth ache or a dental problem?

- 1 Call any NHS Dentist, either your usual one or find one by using this link ([www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/dentists](http://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/dentists)). Remember, you are not registered to a particular dentist like you are with GPs, so which ever one you call should be able to help you.
- 2 Explain your situation and what effect this is having on you. You may want to suggest to the dentist that you email photos - as it can be hard to describe a problem, particularly when in pain. Some dentists may also be able to chat over video call too.

The dentist can help with prescribing pain-relief and antibiotics if indicated. If the dentist can see your situation is urgent they should refer you to one of the Urgent Dental Care Centre/Hub.

The Centre (Hub) staff will talk to you about your dental situation and decide if you need immediate treatment on the day, treatment as quickly as possible or your situation is non-urgent, depending on your symptoms and level of pain. Those involved in this have a detailed operating procedure to help them categorise different dental conditions.

Please don't waste your time going directly to a hospital centre without calling a dentist or 111, as you'll not be seen without an appointment.

If your situation is urgent and outside usual opening times you can use <https://111.nhs.uk/> or call 111 for advice.