



SAUDI
ENDODONTIC SOCIETY
الجمعية السعودية
لعلاج جذور و اعصاب الاسنان

Dental Abscess More Than Just a Toothache

Oral Health = Overall Health
A healthy mouth supports
your whole body.

This educational brochure is part of
a collaborative initiative between the Endodontic
Division at the College of Dentistry, Princess
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Did you know?

Untreated dental
infections can spread
beyond the mouth and
affect your overall health.

Treatment & Prevention

**Don't ignore tooth pain—
early treatment saves teeth.**

Depending on **severity**, treatment may
include:

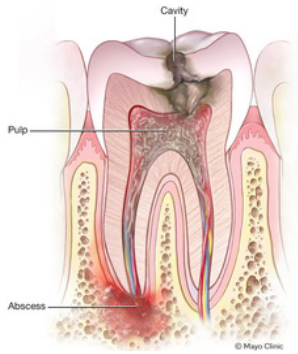
- **Draining the abscess** to relieve pressure
- **Root canal treatment** to remove the infection and save the tooth
- **Tooth extraction** if the tooth cannot be restored
- **Antibiotics** when there is facial swelling, fever, or systemic involvement
- **Pain control** and supportive care

Prevention Tips

- Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste
- Floss every day
- Limit sugary foods and drinks
- Treat cavities early
- Maintain regular dental checkups and cleanings
- Manage chronic conditions (especially diabetes)

What is a Dental Abscess?

A **dental abscess** is a localized bacterial infection forming a **pocket of pus** in the tooth, gums, or supporting bone. If untreated, it can spread to surrounding tissues, the jaw, and rarely other parts of the body, making it serious. It is one of **the most common** causes of dental-related hospital admissions.



Signs & Symptoms

Seek dental care if you notice

- **Throbbing or persistent toothache**
- **Swelling of the gums, face, or jaw**
- **Bad taste, foul odor, or drainage of pus**
- **Difficulty swallowing or opening the mouth**
- **Fever or feeling unwell**
- **Tender or swollen lymph nodes**

How It Affects Your Overall Health

Dental infections are not confined to the mouth; bacteria can enter the bloodstream and affect **general health**.

Complications may include

- Fever and systemic infection
- Sinus infections (sinusitis) from upper tooth abscesses
- Heart inflammation (infective endocarditis), especially in at-risk patients
- Airway compromise in severe facial space infections
- **Rare** but serious: sepsis, a life-threatening bloodstream infection

People with **diabetes, heart disease, immune conditions, or older adults** may experience more severe outcomes from dental abscesses.

Impact on Your Oral Health

Untreated abscesses can lead to

- Severe pain and swelling
- Bone damage
- Tooth loss or mobility
- Spread of infection to jaw, neck, or facial spaces
- Infection extending into the sinus (especially upper teeth)

Why Does It Happen?

A dental abscess can develop due to

- Untreated dental decay (**the most common cause**)
- Gum disease leading to infection
- Cracks or fractures that allow bacteria to enter the tooth
- Poor dental hygiene and plaque buildup
- Previous dental trauma
- Weakened immunity, diabetes, or chronic health conditions

