

# TOOTHACHE IN CHILDREN

## Guidance for Parents

Many dental problems in children are common and treatable.

Early action can prevent unnecessary pain and help your child stay healthy, confident, and ready to learn.

## Common symptoms of toothache in children

- Swelling of the face or jaw
- Sensitivity to hot, cold, or sweet foods
- Complaints of a throbbing pain, or of a sore, tender jaw around the tooth
- Difficulty eating
- Sudden irritability or tearfulness
- Holding their cheek or jaw
- A general feeling of tiredness or illness, fever

**Younger children may struggle to describe the pain clearly.** Look out for cheek-holding, irritability, or avoiding food.

## Common causes of toothache in children

The most common causes of toothache in children are **tooth decay (cavities)** and **gum disease (gingivitis)**.

If you think your child may be suffering from dental decay or gum disease, **Speak to your dentist for advice** – it's always better to check.

## Good to know

Some dental discomfort is linked to development:

- Baby teeth becoming loose
- Adult molars coming through (around ages 6–7 and 11–13)
- Wisdom teeth emerging in teenagers

Mild soreness that settles quickly is common. Persistent or worsening pain is not.

## How school can help

Your child's school may contact you if they notice:

- Swelling
- Bleeding gums
- Difficulty eating
- Ongoing complaints of pain

**Schools do not diagnose or treat dental problems, but sharing information helps ensure your child gets the right care.**



## What you can do at home

If your child is complaining about tooth pain, you could try:

- Applying a cold compress to the outside of the cheek, close to the sore area
- Encouraging gentle brushing
- Avoiding very hot, cold, or sugary foods
- Arranging a dental appointment

## Keeping your child's smile bright and healthy

- ✓ Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste
- ✓ Supervising brushing (especially under age 7)
- ✓ Limit sugary snacks and drinks
- ✓ Follow oral care advice provided by your dental professional

