

What is a tooth abscess? Should I have it treated? If so, how? - Smile Solutions

Canonical: <https://www.smilesolutions.com.au/dental-articles/article/tooth-abscess-treated/>

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There are two main types of tooth abscess: 1: Periapical. 2: Periodontal. A periapical abscess arises at the root tip of the tooth and is generally due to infection of the nerve pulp that runs through the tooth. A periodontal abscess is an associated swelling or collection of pus in the surrounding gum tissue.

Periapical abscess What is it? A periapical abscess usually occurs secondary to decay, but it can also arise due to trauma or past root canal procedures that have failed. When decay becomes advanced and contacts the nerve within the tooth, bacteria from the oral cavity can traverse the root of the tooth and reach the apex (or periapical areas). Here the bacteria interact with the tissues and can induce acute inflammation and the formation of pus, resulting in an abscess at the root of the tooth. Should I have it treated? Yes, a periapical abscess tends to be quite painful. In addition, this kind of dental abscess can spread through tissue spaces within your head and neck to cause serious infections and swellings. How to treat it Periapical abscesses are treated with root canal procedures . These involve removing all decay from the tooth. Small file instruments are then used to clean out the infected nerve from within the root canal of the tooth. Mechanical filing is accompanied by irrigation with solutions that help to chemically remove bacteria and infection. The root canal system is then filled with a biocompatible material and sealed off with a filling or a crown . After the cleaning/filing of the root canal, the tooth abscess is drained. If the dentist deems your tooth be unrestorable due to heavy decay on its crown, the tooth may need to be extracted.

Periodontal abscess What is it? A periodontal abscess is a collection of pus that accumulates in periodontal pockets (gum that surrounds the tooth). These dental abscesses tend to form in patients with a history of periodontitis (gum disease), when the deepened pocket beside the tooth closes over. Should I have it treated? Yes, although the pain associated with a periodontal abscess tends to be less than with a periapical abscess, it will probably cause you some discomfort and swelling. Although rare, periodontal abscesses do have the potential to cause systemic signs of infection (fever, lymph node tenderness and facial cellulitis), which is why these abscesses need to be managed. How to treat it Treatment requires drainage of the pus. Under local anaesthetic, drainage is usually achieved through the pocket by means of debridement (cleaning of the root surface) or by lancing the swelling to allow external drainage. Irrigation with saline throughout the procedure is recommended. In cases where the periodontal disease is advanced and the tooth is beyond salvage, drainage of the pus can be done by extracting the tooth. Antibiotics are generally not necessary for a

tooth abscess. However, if you show systemic signs of infection or are immuno-compromised, antibiotics can be considered. Articles from Smile Solutions View Blogs Specialist Care Smile Solutions 18 Aug 2026 Endodontist vs Dentist for Root Canal: Why It Makes a Difference Read More General Smile Solutions 10 Aug 2026 Mouth Breathing: The Silent Habit That's Changing Your Face and Your Health Read More General Smile Solutions 3 Aug 2026 How Much Does a Dental Crown Cost in Melbourne? Materials Compared Read More Specialist Care Smile Solutions 18 Aug 2026 Endodontist vs Dentist for Root Canal: Why It Makes a Difference Read More General Smile Solutions 10 Aug 2026 Mouth Breathing: The Silent Habit That's Changing Your Face and Your Health Read More General Smile Solutions 3 Aug 2026 How Much Does a Dental Crown Cost in Melbourne? Materials Compared Read More View Blog Call Us 13 13 96 Location Level 1, 220 Collins Street Manchester Unity Building, Melbourne VIC 3000 Hours Of Service Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 6.00pm Saturday: 8.30am – 1.30pm Sunday: By Appointment Our Services General Dentistry Cosmetic Dentistry Orthodontics Specialist Care Dental Implants Children's Dentistry Emergency Dentistry Why Choose Us Our Team Media Awards Careers Technology Location Holistic Dentistry Quick Links Contact Us Articles Packages & Offers Dental Payment Plans Understanding Your Treatment Sitemap Privacy Policy Copyright © Smile Solutions. All Rights Reserved. This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply. Close Our Services General Dentistry Dental Cleans and Hygienists Wisdom Teeth Emergency Dentistry Root Canal Tooth Fillings Chipped or Cracked Teeth Snoring & Sleep Apnoea TMD & Teeth Grinding Sport Mouthguards Dental Anxiety Cosmetic Dentistry Porcelain Veneers & Crowns Same Day Porcelain Veneers™ Composite Bonding Professional Teeth Whitening CEREC Restorations Invisalign® No Braces All-on-4® Dental Implants Gummy Smile Complimentary Cosmetic Consultation Orthodontics Invisalign No Braces Orthodontic Braces Children's Braces and Invisalign Jaw Surgery Dental Implants All-on-4® Dental Implants Conventional & Immediate Implants Dental Bridges Bone Grafting For Implants Dentures Specialist Care Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons Prosthodontists Orthodontists Periodontists Endodontists Paediatric Dentists Complex Dentistry Children's Dentistry First Visit To The Dentist Children's Dental Emergencies Children's Braces and Invisalign Child Dental Benefit Schedule Kids Teeth Cleaning Tips Why Choose Us Our Team Our Location Technology Awards Holistic Dentistry Before After Gallery Payment Plans Packages & Offers Contact Us Call Us 13 13 96 Close Smile Solutions AI Assistant ■ Hello! I'm here to help you with questions about Smile Solutions. How can I assist you today? Popular questions: What services does Smile Solutions offer? How can I contact Smile Solutions What are your business hours? ■■ × 0 /1000 Contact Us Call Us 13 13 96 Location Level 1, 220 Collins Street Manchester Unity Building, Melbourne VIC 3000 Hours Of Service Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 6.00pm Saturday: 8.30am – 1.30pm Sunday: By Appointment Close Book Now