



## Toothache

### What is a toothache?

When your child complains of a painful tooth, sometimes it is just a temporarily sensitive tooth. However, it usually means that your child has tooth decay or a cavity. One complication of a decaying tooth is a gumboil just below the gum line. The infection in the tooth may also spread to the face (causing a swollen cheek) or to the lymph node just under the jawbone.

### How can I take care of my child?

- **Pain relief medicine** First treat the toothache with acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil). If the pain lasts more than a day or becomes severe, call your dentist. An ice cube on the tooth or ice pack on the jaw for 20 minutes will also help.

### How can I help my child prevent toothaches?

Remind your child to brush his teeth, especially the back molars, after every meal. After the age of 3 years, when your child is old enough to use toothpaste, be sure to use a fluoride toothpaste. (Children younger than 3 tend to swallow the toothpaste). If your city's water supply doesn't have fluoride added to it, ask your health care provider for a prescription for fluoride during your next routine visit.

### When should I call my child's dentist?

#### Call **IMMEDIATELY** if:

- The pain is very severe.
- Your child has a fever (over 100°F, or 37.8°C).
- Your child's face is swollen.
- Your child is acting very sick.

#### Call during office hours if:

- Your child has had the pain for more than a day.
- You have other concerns or questions.

NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call 911 or call the Hospital at

(208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.