

Tooth Abscess: Prevention and Complications

Mandakini Mohan*

Department of Periodontics and Oral Implantology, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan University, Bhubaneswar, India

DESCRIPTION

An abscess tooth, also known as a dental abscess, is a painful infection that forms in the tooth or gums. This condition is caused by bacteria entering the tooth, which then causes inflammation and the formation of pus. If left untreated, an abscess tooth can lead to serious health complications, including the spread of infection to other parts of the body [1].

The most common cause of an abscess tooth is tooth decay. When bacteria penetrate the tooth enamel, they can cause the tooth to become infected. Gum disease, which is caused by bacteria that build up in the gums, can also lead to the development of an abscess tooth [2]. Other causes of an abscess tooth include trauma to the tooth or gum, such as a cracked or broken tooth, and a weakened immune system, which can make it becomes more difficult for the body to fight infection [3].

Symptoms

The symptoms of an abscess tooth can vary depending on the severity of the infection. Common symptoms include:

- A severe toothache that can spread to the jaws, neck, or ear
- Sensitivity to hot or cold temperatures
- Swelling in the face, cheek, or neck
- A bitter taste in the mouth
- Bad breath
- Difficulty opening the mouth or swallowing
- Fever

Diagnosis and treatment

A dental professional can diagnose an abscess tooth by performing a physical examination of the tooth and surrounding gums. They may also take X-rays to determine the extent of the infection and whether it has spread to the surrounding bone or tissues. In some cases, a sample of the pus may be taken and sent to a laboratory for testing to identify the specific bacteria causing the infection [4-6].

The treatment of an abscess tooth depends on the severity of the infection. In some cases, the infection can be treated with antibiotics, which are used to kill the bacteria causing the

infection [7,8]. However, antibiotics alone may not be enough to cure an abscess tooth, and dental treatment may be necessary. If the abscess is small, it may be possible to drain it using a needle [9-11]. However, if the infection is severe or the abscess is large, more invasive treatment may be necessary, such as a root canal or tooth extraction [12].

A root canal procedure entails extracting the infected pulp from the tooth and filling it with a dental substance to avoid further infection. Tooth extraction is the removal of the infected tooth from the mouth, which may be necessary if the tooth is too damaged to be saved [13].

Prevention of abscess tooth

The best way to prevent an abscess tooth is to maintain good oral hygiene practices. Brushing teeth twice a day, flossing every day, and visiting a dental expert for regular check-ups and cleanings are all part of it. Avoiding sugary foods and drinks can also help prevent tooth decay and gum disease, which are common causes of abscess teeth.

It is also important to seek prompt treatment for any dental problems, such as cavities or cracked teeth, to prevent them from developing into more serious infections.

Complications

If left untreated, an abscess tooth can lead to serious health complications, including the spread of infection to other parts of the body. The infection can spread to the jawbone, sinuses, or brain, which can lead to meningitis, brain abscess, or sepsis. In rare cases, an abscess tooth can also cause Ludwig's angina, which is a serious infection that affects the tissues of the neck and can cause difficulty breathing or swallowing.

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Correspondence to: Mandakini Mohan, Department of Periodontics and Oral Implantology, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan University, Bhubaneswar, India, E-mail:mohan@gmail.com

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