



SENSITIVE TEETH

There are many reasons why your teeth might be painful, but one of the most common is sensitive teeth pain.

If you've felt a short, sharp twinge of pain when you take a sip of a cold drink, eat an ice cream or a bowl of hot soup, or even when you breathe in cold air on a winter's day, then it could be a sign that you have tooth sensitivity

Your teeth become sensitive to cold and hot when the softer, inner part of the tooth called 'dentine' becomes exposed.

This can happen if some of your gum has receded leading to the root of the tooth being exposed. The root is made only of dentine and so is not 'insulated' by enamel.

On other parts of the tooth the enamel might have worn away or been eroded away by acid, again leading to the dentine underneath being exposed.

Dentine is full of tiny channels that run towards the nerve at the center of the tooth. This is why, when you eat or drink something of a certain temperature, it can stimulate the nerve inside and cause that nasty twinge of pain that we know as sensitivity to hot and cold.

To find out what is causing your tooth pain you should visit us for a check up. Your dentist needs to rule out the other causes of tooth pain, such as tooth decay, infection, disease or injury.

There are other reasons why your teeth feel painful with cold, hot, sweet or hard foods.

CAVITIES

Cavities are the result of tooth decay, and the pain they cause can feel like tooth sensitivity – but they are different. The pain from a cavity tends to be a dull ache that may be triggered by eating or biting down on something and may resemble sensitivity pain, which is often caused by cold or hot food and drink.

CRACKED TEETH

If you have a cracked tooth, this can also affect the nerve deep inside the tooth and make you sensitive to the things you eat and drink, causing pain. If your tooth is sensitive to pressure it is very important to come in and discuss your symptoms with your dentist

NEW FILLINGS

Your teeth may be sensitive to heat and cold after a new filling. A new filling can sometimes take up to 6 weeks to settle

WHAT WE CAN DO

At Dulwich Wood dental, once we have ruled out an underlying cause for your sensitivity such as a cavity, there are treatments available that can be really helpful, most of which are simple and non invasive.

These include:

Applying desensitising products to exposed dentine surfaces

Bonding over exposed areas with tooth coloured filling material- this is particularly useful if the dentine is becoming very worn as it will protect the dentine from further wear.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Reduce your intake of acidic foods and drinks – these certainly make your teeth more sensitive.

Use a desensitising toothpaste – these products really make a difference and can be used regularly twice daily.

Brush your teeth gently- vigorous brushing can cause wear of the enamel and make sensitivity worse.

Avoid whitening toothpastes as these are more abrasive.