

How to get rid of a toothache: The best remedies

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If you have experienced a toothache, you know it's no joke. That searing

pain in your mouth can keep you from concentrating, getting adequate sleep and so much more. Plus, not treating the root cause of a toothache can lead to bigger problems down the road.

According to StatPearls, it's estimated that [13% of adults seek care for dental infections or toothache every four years](#).

Here, experts will walk you through the different ways of finding toothache relief.

How to get rid of a toothache

California dentist [Dr. Guneet Alag](#), said the causes of toothaches can be varied.

"Toothache could have many causes, including some not directly correlated to oral health, such as a sinus infection," Alag said. "Other cases could be caused by trauma to the face or mouth, gum recession, gum infection, teeth grinding, wisdom teeth, thin enamel or sensitive teeth and tooth decay."

The [American Dental Association](#) states that the type of treatment necessary will depend on the type of toothache you are experiencing. For example, sharp [pain](#) might be caused by enamel damage from cavities, chips or cracks, which might call for repair. It's also possible that you may need a new filling or crown.

When it comes to seeking toothache relief, there are various options. "The first remedy is to rinse your mouth with warm saltwater. Saltwater can help reduce inflammation and kill bacteria in your mouth. To make a saltwater solution, add a teaspoon of salt to a cup of [warm water](#) and rinse your mouth for 30 seconds, then spit it out," advised California dentist [Dr. Rana Baroudi](#).

Baroudi also recommended applying a cold compress to the affected area. "A cold compress can help reduce swelling and numb the nerves in your mouth, providing temporary relief from the pain. To make a cold compress, wrap a few ice cubes in a towel and hold it against your cheek for 15-20 minutes at a time."

Toothache remedies

Besides saltwater rinses and cold compresses, other common approaches to getting rid of a toothache include the following:

- **Peppermint tea:** Peppermint has numbing properties that can help alleviate tooth pain. Brew a cup of peppermint tea, let it cool down, and swish it in your mouth before spitting it out. "One remedy that works to help alleviate toothache pain is to soak a peppermint tea bag in boiling water for a few minutes, then let it cool," Alag said. "Place the tea bag in your mouth where you're experiencing pain for relief. The oils within the peppermint leaves can alleviate pain topically and provide a gentle cooling sensation in the area, which can help subdue the discomfort."
- **Over-the-counter painkillers:** Painkillers such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen can help reduce pain and inflammation. Be sure to follow the recommended dosage.
- **Clove oil:** According to the University of Minnesota, [most essential oils are safe and free of adverse side effects when used properly](#). Substances like clove oil can be effective if used intelligently for toothache relief. It's crucial to apply it properly and avoid ingesting it. Eugenol in cloves acts as a natural antiseptic and anesthetic. Applying clove oil to the affected area or placing a whole clove next to the painful tooth can help ease the pain.
- **Garlic:** California dentist [Dr. Joyce Kahng](#) states that garlic

contains allicin, a natural antibiotic that can help fight off infection in the [mouth](#). "Crush a clove of garlic and apply it directly to the affected tooth for a few minutes before rinsing with warm water," she recommended.

Toothache remedies to avoid

While several home remedies can help alleviate the pain and discomfort associated with a toothache, there are also some remedies that you should avoid. Kahng suggests avoiding these three approaches to treating your toothache at home.

- Applying aspirin directly to the tooth or gums. This can cause burning and irritation.
- Placing a raw onion on the affected tooth. This can irritate and make the pain worse.
- Using alcohol or hydrogen peroxide as a mouthwash. This can cause irritation and damage to the gums.

When to see your dentist about a toothache

The toothache remedies mentioned here are intended to help lessen temporary tooth pain. But there are instances when you should contact your dentist. "If you are experiencing a persistent toothache, it's very important to have it checked by a dentist as soon as possible," Alag said.

If your toothache presents with the following symptoms, you should seek immediate treatment from a medical or dental professional:

- Severe pain that doesn't go away on its own
- Swelling
- Fever

- Difficulty swallowing.

"If you have a bearable toothache that goes away after a day or so, there shouldn't be any cause for concern," Alag said. "However, if symptoms worsen, persist or develop, then don't delay calling your dentist. If you have a [toothache](#) that comes and goes a few times during the month, this can also be a cause for concern, warranting a visit to your [dentist](#) as well."

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