

FLOSS

— dental boutique —

Cracked Tooth patient Information

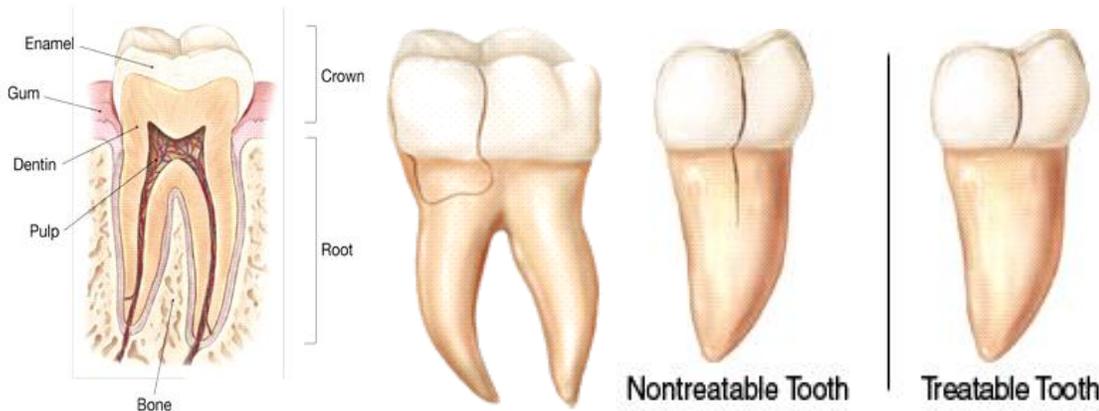
Date: «general.date»

Patient Name: «patient.firstname» «patient.lastname»

Tooth pain from a cracked tooth can be a diagnostic challenge. Often the tooth will look normal on an x-ray and even clinically when looking into your mouth.

Pain can be intermittent when chewing. Patients often report that if they bite just right on the tooth they get a sharp pain. Pain when releasing biting pressure can be a sign of a cracked tooth. Pain to temperature extremes may also be associated with a cracked tooth.

When the outer hard tissue of a tooth is cracked it can cause irritation of the soft pulp tissue inside a tooth. Repeated chewing will eventually make cracks worse and symptoms intensify as the pulp tissue becomes more and more irritated. Infection of the pulp can occur as bacteria enter the pulp thru the crack.



The extent and location of the crack dictate the prognosis of treatment. Some cracks are just shallow craze lines in the enamel and do not cause pain and are of little concern.

Back teeth which have cusps (pointed projections) can sometimes fracture off. When this happens the pulp usually isn't damaged so root canal treatment may not be needed. The tooth will usually need a crown to restore the tooth. But be aware the crack possibly may still irritate the nerve and tooth may require a root canal either soon after or sometime after a crown is placed.

The extent of the crack will determine how the pulp responds and oftentimes these teeth need root canal treatment (see above). While doing a root canal will eliminate the pain in a cracked tooth the crack remains after the root canal treatment. Therefore it is very important to get a crown placed by your dentist to hold the tooth together and prevent further cracking tendencies.

Cracks in teeth are not like breaks in bone. Bones will heal if broken but a fractured tooth will not heal. Root canal treatment to relieve pain and crowns to provide protection are the best options to save a cracked tooth. Once treated most cracked teeth will function comfortably for years but if cracks continue to progress after treatment then in some cases maintaining the tooth may not be possible.