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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/toothdisorders.html>

Tooth Disorders

What are teeth?

Your teeth are made of a hard, bonelike material. There are four parts:

- Enamel, your tooth's hard surface
- Dentin, the hard yellow part under the enamel
- Cementum, the hard tissue that covers the root and keeps your teeth in place
- Pulp, the soft connective tissue in the center of your tooth. It contains nerves and blood vessels.

You need your teeth for many activities that you may take for granted. These include eating, speaking and even smiling.

What are tooth disorders?

There are many different problems that can affect your teeth, including:

- **Tooth decay** [<https://medlineplus.gov/toothdecay.html>] - damage to a tooth's surface, which can lead to cavities
- **Abscess** [<https://medlineplus.gov/abscess.html>] - a pocket of pus, caused by a tooth infection
- **Impacted tooth** - a tooth that did not erupt (break through the gum) when it should have. It is usually wisdom teeth that are impacted, but it can sometimes happen to other teeth.
- **Misaligned teeth** (malocclusion)
- **Tooth injuries** such as broken or chipped teeth

What causes tooth disorders?

The causes of tooth disorders varies, depending on the problem. Sometimes the cause is not taking good care of your teeth. In other cases, you may have been born with the problem or the cause is an accident.

What are the symptoms of tooth disorders?

The symptoms can vary, depending on the problem. Some of the more common symptoms include:

- Abnormal color or shape of the tooth
- Tooth pain
- Worn-down teeth

How are tooth disorders diagnosed?

Your dentist will ask about your symptoms, look at your teeth, and probe them with dental instruments. In some cases, you may need dental x-rays.

What are the treatments for tooth disorders?

The treatment will depend on the problem. Some common treatments are:

- Fillings for cavities

- Root canals for cavities or infections that affect the pulp (inside of the tooth)
- Extractions (pulling teeth) for teeth that are impacted and causing problems or are too damaged to be fixed. You may also have a tooth or teeth pulled because of overcrowding in your mouth.

Can tooth disorders be prevented?

The main thing that you can do to prevent tooth disorders is to take good care of your teeth

[<https://medlineplus.gov/dentalhealth.html>] :

- Brush your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- Clean between your teeth every day with floss or another type of between-the-teeth cleaner
- Limit sugary snacks and drinks
- Don't smoke or chew tobacco
- See your dentist or oral health professional regularly

Start Here

- Overview of Tooth Disorders [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/mouth-and-dental-disorders/tooth-disorders/overview-of-tooth-disorders>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/trastornos-bucales-y-dentales/trastornos-dentales/introducci%C3%B3n-a-los-trastornos-dentales>]
- Tooth Problems [<https://familydoctor.org/symptom/tooth-problems/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/sintoma/problemas-de-los-dientes/?adfree=true>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- Panoramic Dental X-Ray [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/panoramic-xray>]
(American College of Radiology; Radiological Society of North America)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/es/info/panoramic-xray>]

Treatments and Therapies

- Dental Implant Surgery [<https://myoms.org/what-we-do/dental-implant-surgery/>]
(American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons)

Related Issues

- Dental Amalgam Fillings [<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/dental-devices/dental-amalgam-fillings>]
(Food and Drug Administration)
- Diabetes, Gum Disease, and Other Dental Problems [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/gum-disease-dental-problems>]
 **Easy-to-Read** (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/diabetes/informacion-general/prevenir-problemas/boca>]

Specifics

- Bruxism [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/health-info/bruxism>]  (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/espanol/temas-de-salud/el-bruxismo>]
- Impacted Wisdom Teeth [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/wisdom-teeth/symptoms-causes/syc-20373808?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/wisdom-teeth/symptoms-causes/syc-20373808?p=1>]
- Toothache: First Aid [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-toothache/basics/ART-20056628?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/first-aid/first-aid-toothache/basics/art-20056628?p=1>]

Genetics

- Amelogenesis imperfecta: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/amelogenesis-imperfecta>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Cherubism: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/cherubism>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Dentinogenesis imperfecta: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/dentinogenesis-imperfecta>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Hypohidrotic ectodermal dysplasia: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/hypohidrotic-ectodermal-dysplasia>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Oculodentodigital dysplasia: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/oculodentodigital-dysplasia>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Bruxism [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Bruxism%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Root Canal Therapy [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?intr=root+canal&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Sleep Bruxism [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Sleep+Bruxism%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Tooth Diseases [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Tooth+Diseases%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Tooth, Impacted [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Tooth,+Impacted%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Emergency Department Visits for Tooth Disorders: United States, 2020–2022. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40553097>]
- Article: 'SHEEP scoring': A practical tool for evaluating the prognosis and restorability... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40317240>]
- Article: Characteristics and risk factors in odontogenic maxillary sinusitis from different dental... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40011903>]
- Tooth Disorders -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Tooth+Diseases%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22Iast+2+Years%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- Find a Dentist [<https://www.agd.org/practice/tools/patient-resources/find-an-agd-dentist>] (Academy of General Dentistry)
- Find an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon [<https://myoms.org/find-a-surgeon/>] (American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons)
- National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/>]  Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/espanol>]

Children

- Bruxism (Teeth Grinding or Clenching) (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/bruxism.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/bruxism.html>]

• First Aid: Teeth Injuries (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/tooth-sheet.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/tooth-sheet.html>]

Women

- Using Teeth Whiteners during Pregnancy [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/tooth-whitening-pregnancy.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/tooth-whitening-pregnancy.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Amelogenesis imperfecta [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001578.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001578.htm>]
- Broken or knocked out tooth [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000058.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000058.htm>]
- Bruxism [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001413.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001413.htm>]
- Dental crowns [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007631.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007631.htm>]
- Impacted tooth [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001057.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001057.htm>]
- Root canal [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007275.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007275.htm>]
- Tooth - abnormal colors [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003065.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003065.htm>]
- Tooth abscess [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001060.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001060.htm>]
- Toothaches [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003067.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003067.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Amelogenesis imperfecta [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001578.htm>]

Broken or knocked out tooth [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000058.htm>]

Bruxism [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001413.htm>]

Dental crowns [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007631.htm>]

Dental plaque identification at home [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003426.htm>]

Dental x-rays [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003801.htm>]

Dry socket [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000780.htm>]

Impacted tooth [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001057.htm>]

Root canal [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007275.htm>]

Tooth - abnormal colors [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003065.htm>]

Tooth - abnormal shape [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003064.htm>]

Tooth abscess [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001060.htm>]

Tooth anatomy [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002214.htm>]

Tooth extraction [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007630.htm>]

Tooth formation - delayed or absent [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003061.htm>]

Toothaches [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003067.htm>]

Widely spaced teeth [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003063.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Child Dental Health [<https://medlineplus.gov/childdentalhealth.html>]

Dental Health [<https://medlineplus.gov/dentalhealth.html>]

Gum Disease [<https://medlineplus.gov/gumdisease.html>]

Orthodontia [<https://medlineplus.gov/orthodontia.html>]

Tooth Decay [<https://medlineplus.gov/toothdecay.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Tooth Disorders* is the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research [<http://www.nidcr.nih.gov/>]

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/toothdisorders.html>] on *Tooth Disorders*

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