

❖ TOOTHACHES

These occur when there is an underlying cavity, infection or opening in the tooth or gum that will require dental treatment. OTC treatments only work to provide short-term masking of the pain rather than treating the cause and uncontrolled infections can cause serious complications, including death, without sounding too dramatic.

What products are available for toothaches OTC?

It depends if you prefer taking a tablet or using something topically:

1. ORAL PAIN RELIEF:

Although there are many options to 'mask' the pain, I have seen so many people all around Australia delaying or avoiding dental treatment altogether and simply take tablets. I strongly disagree that this is the best option; because not only can an infection spread into the system and become septic, but by trying to save money on treatment it may get worse the longer you leave it and end up costing you a fortune if needing a root canal or implant! A stitch in time saves nine!!

As discussed in the chapter about pain, oral pain relieving medication is available and the choice will depend on if there is inflammation present. Always use the 'step-up' approach to reduce the side effects and medications in your body.

If there is only pain and no inflammation;

- i. Paracetamol 500mg 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours, with a maximum of 8 per day (**Panadol**) then
- ii. Paracetamol 665mg 1-2 tablets every 6 to 8 hours, with a maximum of 6 per day (**Panadol Osteo**) then
- iii. Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 10mg 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours (**Panadeine**) then
- iv. Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 15mg 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours (**Panadeine Extra**) then
- v. If pain is not allowing sleep during the night; Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 10mg + Doxylamine 5mg 1-2 tablets 30 minutes before bed (**Mersyndol Night**)

If there is pain and inflammation:

- i. Ibuprofen 200mg 1-2 tablets after food every 4 to 6 hours, with a maximum of 6 per day (**Nurofen**) then
- ii. Ibuprofen + 12mg Codeine 1-2 tablets after food every 4 to 6 hours, with a maximum of 6 per day (**Nurofen Plus**) then
- iii. If not removing pain completely, you can **add** Paracetamol 500mg 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours on top of this regime for a maximum of 48 hours.

If you are requiring dental work, then you must stop the anti-inflammatories 24 hours before your appointment as it can cause bleeding and hence make the dentist's job harder and they may possibly ask you to come back another day.

2. TOPICAL RELIEF:

<u>PRODUCT</u>	<u>INGREDIENT</u>	<u>DIRECTIONS</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
CLOVE OIL	<u>Clove oil</u>	Apply to the affected area when required	*Natural approach to remove pain and acts as a mild antibacterial. *Needs to be applied with a cotton tip to the area *Studies aren't conclusive as to how effective it is, but an option if you're at your wits end!
CEPACAIN MOUTHWASH	<u>Benzocaine</u> 4mg/mL (local anaesthetic) <u>Cetylpyridinium</u> and <u>ethanol</u> (antibacterial)	Gargle 10-15 mL every 3 hours and spit out	*Contains a local anaesthetic which numbs the pain for 3 to 4 hours *The antibacterial can help to clear a mild infection
NYAL TOOTHACHE DROPS	<u>Benzocaine</u> (anaesthetic) <u>Ethanol</u> and <u>phenol</u> (antibacterial)	Apply to the affected area every few hours when required	*Contains an anaesthetic to numb the pain *The antibacterial can help to clear mild infections
SM33 ADULT LIQUID	<u>Lignocaine</u> 2.5% (anaesthetic) <u>Salicylic acid</u> (<u>Ethanol</u> and <u>tannins</u>)	Apply to the affected area every 3 to 4 hours when required for pain	*Contains a local anaesthetic which numbs the pain for 3 to 4 hours *The antibacterial and help to clear a mild infection *Salicylic acid can help to reduce inflammation
DIFFLAM THROAT SPRAY OR SOLUTION	<u>Benzydamine</u> (anti-inflammatory) <u>Chlorhexidine</u> (anti-bacterial)	<u>SPRAY:</u> <u>SOLUTION:</u>	*Topical anti-inflammatory which will remove pain and inflammation *Contains an antibacterial to help remove any infection that may be present

❖ MOUTHWASH

It is vital to brush your teeth using a soft tooth brush; floss and use a mouth wash twice a day for the best oral hygiene. Mouthwashes try to remove any food and bacteria trapped in between your teeth as well as freshen your breath.

SAVACOL:

This contains the effective anti-bacterial Chlorhexidine which can help to reduce any bacteria in the mouth and gums. It is excellent for people suffering from gingivitis or after surgery. However, it can stain the enamel on the teeth if it is used for long periods of time. There is a version that contains alcohol and one without; the alcohol can cause burning in some people so it is best to avoid its use.

LISTERINE:

This is to be used as a daily mouth wash, preferably without alcohol to help remove any food and bacteria trapped in between the teeth. There are less intense versions available now so if you don't like your eyes watering or the 'boom' feeling...then use the newer types!

BIOTENE:

This contains Xylitol which is an artificial lubricant which is excellent for sufferers of dry mouth. You can have dry mouth syndrome from too much caffeine, alcohol, after chemotherapy and from certain medications including antihistamines available over-the-counter.

It is important to maintain normal saliva production because it reduces the chances of cavity and tooth decay. It also is more comfortable having moisture in your mouth.

Biotene comes in a mouthwash, spray, gel or chewing gum so depending on what you prefer you have several options!