



**University of North Carolina Wilmington  
Abrons Student Health Center**

## **INSTRUCTION SHEET: TOOTHACHE**

The Student Health Center has provided temporary treatment for your toothache.

Realize that the Student Health Center treatment can help relieve the pain of a toothache, but doesn't treat the cause. A filling in the tooth, drainage of an abscess, or removal of the tooth may be necessary; ongoing care should be provided by your personal/referral dentist.

Fever, swelling of the jaw, or redness around the tooth may mean an abscess (infection) is present. Again, antibiotics may help, but a dentist should see you promptly: The tooth likely needs repair or removal before you will get better.

If you do not see your dentist for proper treatment, you will likely have continuing pain, and the tooth will likely die. Infection can worsen, and spread to other parts of your body.

### **MEASURES YOU SHOULD TAKE TO HELP TREAT YOUR TOOTHACHE:**

1. Rest at home. Drink plenty of liquids.
2. Over-the-counter pain medications can relieve discomfort associated with a toothache. Acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen, or naproxen can be taken, depending on individual preference.
3. The provider may prescribe a stronger pain medication. Take this medication only if needed. The prescription medication can cause drowsiness, so perform no dangerous tasks, such as driving or operating machinery, while taking the medication.
4. The provider may prescribe an antibiotic if signs of infection are present. Take the medicine as directed, until gone.
5. Call your personal/referral dentist for an appointment. Let the doctor or staff know that you will need a *prompt* "work-in" appointment.
6. If your overall condition worsens, go to the closest emergency department *promptly*. Specific signs of worsening include high fever, increased facial swelling, severe headache, mental confusion, and repeated vomiting.