

## CRACKED TOOTH SYNDROME

### What is Cracked Tooth Syndrome?

Your teeth are generally very strong but over time teeth can become weaker. This is especially true when they have large fillings. People who grind or clench their teeth can also be more susceptible to cracked teeth as they put undue pressures on the teeth. Certain diets which are abrasive (betel nut chewers, consumption of seeds), and hard foods (bones, nuts, hard sweets) can also cause cracked teeth.

Many teeth have small cracks in them and In fact they may never cause a problem. Often the cracks are so small that they are not visible to the eye. You may start feeling pain though if the cracks extends Inside the tooth Into the dentine or pulp.

### How do I know I have this condition?

The pain due to cracked tooth can be of different severities, it may be mild or it may be intense. Cracks can cause pain when you bite hard food and often will the pain will just come and go. This is due to the fact that the crack may only hurt if you bite in a particular direction and it opens slightly. The condition can be difficult to diagnose and is impossible to detect from an X-ray. The dentist will carry out tests on your teeth to determine if you are suffering from this condition.

### How can Cracked tooth Syndrome be treated?

- No treatment- the condition can be monitored, if the pain is relatively mild.
- Often there may be a period of trial and error particularly if the pain is poorly located and the dentist may have to proceed cautiously to determine which tooth is cracked
- If there is a filling in the tooth the dentist may be able to remove the filling and inspect the inside of the tooth to see if there is a crack inside. A new filling may be placed if the cracked part is superficial and can easily be seen.
- Crowning the tooth- this can help to strengthen the tooth and reduce pain although there is no guarantee that the pain may not return. A subsequent Root Canal Treatment or in worst cases, an extraction may still be the outcome
- If the crack runs into the pulp and the nerve of the tooth is damaged then root canal treatment may be necessary
- Wearing a night guard- this can relieve pressure from the teeth if you grind them at night.
- If the crack is found to extend right into the root or renders the tooth unrestorable, then removing the tooth may be the only option.



Picture shows a moderately superficial crack