

Tooth Decay

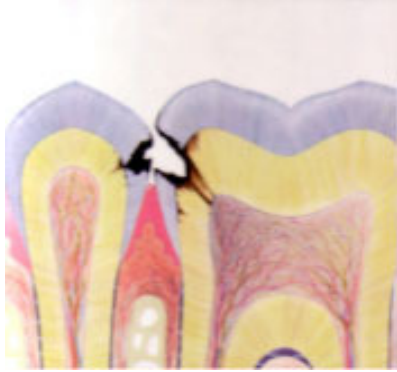
The progression of tooth decay can lead to a dental cavity, an abscess and the need for a root canal.



Here is an image of tooth decay as it starts to grow between two teeth.



As you can see, the cavity starts in the enamel on the sides of the teeth, where they touch each other. Decay can also form on the top chewing surface of the tooth, or on the outside part of the tooth that shows to the front of your mouth



Next, if left untreated, the decay moves through the softer dentin, and enters the pulp chamber. When this happens, it will cause the pulp to die and cause an **abscess** to form at the root tip. This abscess presses on the vital nerve endings outside the root - in the surrounding bone - causing the tooth to hurt.

This abscess often causes pain in the tooth swelling in the surrounding soft tissue, and - more often than not - a severe toothache.



To treat this condition, we usually will need to perform a root canal. If the abscess and the tooth decay is really bad, the tooth may have to be extracted.