

Swelling of the mouth or face



Swellings of the face or mouth may be a sign of infection, particularly if the swelling is associated with warmth and redness.

A facial swelling which makes it hard to fully open your mouth, causes difficulty in swallowing or breathing or is closing an eye requires urgent attention. Attend your local Accident and Emergency unit immediately.

Swelling of the gum may indicate a dental abscess and is usually painful. If the infection spreads, you may also develop a high temperature (fever) and feel generally unwell.

If a facial swelling is causing concern, call your dental practice by telephone. If you don't have a regular dentist or it's out of hours, search '*NHS Direct Wales Dentist*' for the dental helpline number for your Health Board or call 111 or NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47. Avoid visiting a GP as there's little they can do to help.

- Painkillers such as Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen can provide pain relief. Take care to follow dosage advice on the packet.

Possible treatments during the coronavirus pandemic include:

- Removing the affected tooth (extraction)
- Incision and drainage - a small cut (incision) is made in the gum to drain the abscess (further treatment may be needed)
- Antibiotics may be needed if there is spreading infection. During the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic you might be offered antibiotics to delay treatment until the pandemic is over, particularly if the intent is to save and restore the tooth.

