

DENTAL PAIN MANAGEMENT



For dental pain, **NSAIDs** (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs) are the first line of therapy. Most commonly we recommend **Ibuprofen** (also known as Advil or Motrin) for dental pain because it treats not only the symptom of pain but also one of the causes of pain – inflammation.

Acetaminophen (also known as **Tylenol**) can be used instead of ibuprofen or with ibuprofen.

Ibuprofen and Tylenol taken together have been proven to **work better than opioids** (also known as narcotics) for dental pain. Additionally, Ibuprofen and Tylenol cause a lot fewer side effects than opioids. Additionally, **opioids are linked to drug overdose and death**, so the use of opioids in the management of dental pain is strongly discouraged.

	Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)	Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
How much can I take?	Most people can take 600 mg of Ibuprofen every 6 hours for several days to help manage dental pain. That is 3 regular over-the-counter pills (each over the counter pill is usually 200 mg – be sure to check the label). Do not take more than 3200 mg a day (24 hours).	Most people can take 500-1000 mg of Acetaminophen every 6 hours not to exceed 4000 mg in a day (24 hours) . Be very careful not to take too much of Acetaminophen or other medications that contain this drug, since overdose can lead to liver failure and death.
Is it safe for me?	Some people should not take Ibuprofen. If you are pregnant, are allergic to NSAIDs, are taking blood thinning medication, have kidney problems, have had stomach ulcers or gastrointestinal bleeding, have a hypersensitivity to aspirin, or take lithium or other medications that may affect your kidney function, please speak with your dentist, physician, or pharmacist before taking ibuprofen.	Some people should not take Acetaminophen. If you have liver problems, are allergic to acetaminophen, have alcoholism or drink more than 3 drinks a day, or have severe kidney problems, please speak with your dentist, physician, or pharmacist before taking ibuprofen.

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You can take Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen together for additional relief. It is better to take some of each than too much of one.

Please remember that treating the cause of the pain is very important. If you have a tooth infection, it needs to be treated properly. Do not rely only on pain medications to mask your pain. If you are having pain after a recent dental procedure and it does not get better after 3 days, or if the pain starts to worsen, or you experience swelling, fever, difficulty swallowing, or difficulty breathing, call us right away or seek medical attention immediately. You may be experiencing a complication that requires medical intervention.

If you have any questions please call us at (215) 525-3046.