

Re: Problem With Nerve / Back Molar

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- *From:* Steven Bornfeld <dentaltwinmonsense@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 04 Apr 2005 01:48:50 GMT
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VoidBox wrote:

I hope it's OK to post here - I guess you can always ignore this if this post isn't suitable for the group. I'd appreciate any views on a problem I have with my back molar. I'll need to give you a fair amount of background.

I'm male, in my early thirties (generally healthy), and had two lower wisdom teeth and no upper ones. The lower wisdom teeth had come through perpendicular to the rest of my teeth and were impacting on my back molars. Despite my dentist's advising me for several years that they should be removed, I left them until about half a year ago, when I eventually consented (he referred me to a specialist rather than remove them himself). With hindsight I would have had them out ten years earlier, but it's too late now.

The specialist pointed out on the pre-extraction x-ray that I had some decay on my back molars. He then went ahead. The extraction went quite well. I did have a swelling like a golf ball for a couple of days on my left hand side but it then subsided and overall I seemed to recover as quickly as I guess anyone does. No obvious complications at the time.

Three months later (shortly before my next routine check-up), I had toothache in my left back molar. It came for a few hours then went away. Then a week or so later it came on for about 24 hours, then went away. I went to see the dentist. He had a look and confirmed that both the back molars needed a filling.

My dentist put in a temporary filling in the problem tooth and for a week all was fine. He then took it out and put in an amalgam filling.

From immediately afterwards, I was in bad pain. The pain was severe and continuous (though dull). At its worst I could hardly think. It didn't subside even when I took care to rest

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that side of the mouth completely for hours on end. My back molar was also slightly elevated. It hurt to bite on it (so obviously I avoided doing so). The tooth was not sensitive at all to hot or cold.

The pain was alleviated for a few hours by Ibuprofen or Paracetamol, but I tried to avoid taking these as much as possible. I also was able to reduce the pain by holding a cold flannel to my face in a line from my ear to where the tooth was (and a bit beyond).

I stuck it out for a few days hoping it would go away, but it didn't and went back to the dentist about a week later. He took it out and put back in another temporary filling. The pain went.

A week later still I went back again. The dentist said that the decay was quite deep, but, rather than refer me immediately to a specialist for root canal, he hoped that it might work to try a white filling. He put one in (leaving a little bit of the temporary filling as a 'lining') and it did seem to work - for about a month and a half all was fine. I thought maybe the amalgam filling had caused problems because of the way it expands slightly.

However, this weekend the pain came back. On Thursday evening something felt not quite right (although no pain or significant discomfort). On Friday I started from being in very mild discomfort in the morning to moderate discomfort in the afternoon. In the evening I was in considerable discomfort and could get very little sleep (I didn't take any painkillers).

On Saturday I was in severe discomfort / pain again for most of the day. It wasn't quite as bad as before as the pain reduced slightly when I rested but it was pretty much continuous. Suddenly in the afternoon the pain subsided rapidly and by the evening I was not even in much discomfort. I had a good night's sleep on Saturday night and have been in no discomfort or pain today, although the tooth felt very very slightly elevated at times. By Sunday evening the tooth was not feeling elevated and I was feeling back to normal (although for some reason - in case it's relevant - I had an occasional very slight tingling feeling around the muscle / nerve underneath my chin - not quite where the pain was).

All weekend I have taken care not to bite on it. I have also switched to a sensitive toothpaste and new toothbrushes.

Unfortunately my regular dentist has suddenly retired so I have to go to a new one. I don't know what he's like. So I'd

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be grateful if anyone can offer any suggestions (maybe what some of the possibilities are or whether you've come across anything like this before). Is this something I should try to live with and see if it goes away or do I need to take more immediate action? I suspect that I might have triggered it by chewing something relatively hard (e.g. nuts / raw carrots) and that up to now the tooth has been up to managing with softer foods (e.g. chicken).

Thanks in advance and apologies if this was an inappropriate post.

Sam.

Your post is more appropriate than 90+% of the stuff here. Unfortunately, I think it's time to break down and have that root canal. I think you've given the tooth more than adequate time to calm down. If it does calm down now (possible) it will likely nevertheless lead to an abscess down the road. This abscess will doubtless occur on New Year's eve, or while your dentist is on vacation or...you get the picture.

Sorry,
Steve

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Cut the nonsense to reply