What Should I do If I Have Tooth or Mouth Pain?

The most important thing you can do right now to stay healthy and make sure others are healthy is to stay home. In Virginia, most dentist offices are only providing care if it is an emergency. Some dental offices are temporarily closed. This is short-term. If your mouth or teeth hurt or you think you have a dental emergency CALL your dental provider or local safety-net clinic. Tell them how you feel, including if you have a fever, a cough or chest pain. Your dental team will tell you what to do next. Your dentist may talk with you about your symptoms on the phone or over video chat. ***DO NOT GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM.***

Some examples of dental emergencies are:
- Very bad toothache pain (not just a twinge)
- Swollen gums, face, or neck
- Bleeding in your mouth that does not stop
- Infection or a substantial risk of it
- Recent trauma to the mouth

Dental appointments for these needs should be rescheduled:
- Regular exam or cleaning
- Regular visits for braces
- Treatment for cavities that are not painful
- Removal of teeth that are not painful

Hygiene:
- Wash your hands very often with soap and water. Scrub for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap is not available.
- Don't touch your face. This is a lot harder than it sounds and requires effort.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with the inside of your elbow or upper arm.
- Stay home if you are feeling sick, and seek appropriate medical guidance.
- Take care of your teeth and mouth. Brush and floss your teeth, clean your tongue, swish, and spit, and gargle twice with mouthwash.

Find a Dental Provider:
- Virginia Dental Safety Net Clinics: Emergency Care and COVID-19 Testing Spreadsheet https://bit.ly/COVID19Clinics
- Virginia Health Care Foundation: https://www.vhcf.org/who-and-how-we-help/dental/dental-safety-net-clinics-in-virginia/
- Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (not all of the clinics have dental): https://www.vafreeclinics.org/clinics-in-virginia
- Virginia Community Healthcare Association (not all clinics have dental): https://vacommunityhealth.org/about-the-association/about-chcs/locations/
- Virginia Dental Association: https://www.vadental.org/for-our-patients/find-a-dentist
- To find a dental provider that accepts Medicaid, call DentaQuest: 1-888-912-3456
- VCU Health: 800-762-6161
- COVID Hotline: Virginia Department of Health: 1-877-ASK-VDH3