



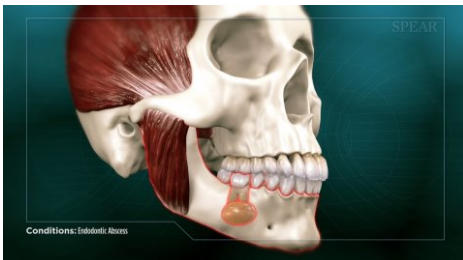
An abscess is a pocket of pus that forms at the root of the tooth due to a bacterial infection. If left untreated, the abscess can possibly spread to other areas, causing severe consequences to your overall health.



The infection usually originates from the inner pulp of the tooth, and can be caused by tooth decay and dental trauma. As the infection spreads, your body forms a sac around it to attempt to contain it, which creates pressure and painful sensations.



Signs and symptoms that you have an abscess can include a consistent throbbing toothache, fever, swelling of the face, gums, or jaw, foul smelling breath, and pain when chewing. You may also experience a foul taste in your mouth if the abscess is draining pus.



An abscess will not heal on its own and if left untreated, the infection can spread to the jaw bone and other parts of the head and neck. If allowed to expand, it can also weaken the jaw as it begins to resorb and replace bony tissue.



Abscesses are very serious so it is critical to work closely with your doctor to treat it as early as possible to minimize the potential for harm.