

## Dental Do-It-Yourself

So you wanna save a few bucks on dentistry? Here you go...brush and floss thoroughly and keep up with your regular cleanings. But if you are looking for a shortcut you are probably beyond that point. You are looking for a way to treat that toothache on your own.

You can treat some problems and save a visit, but know your limitations. Swelling around the tooth, face or lymph nodes are serious and you should get in immediately. Pain with clenching or chewing could also be signs of an infection or even a cracked tooth and will usually get worse. Severe pain that keeps you up a night may eventually go away, but will almost always return with more gusto.

One of the few problems you can deal with on your own is hypersensitive root surfaces. This is usually a tooth or teeth consistently sensitive to brushing, cold, sometimes sweets and usually goes away pretty quickly. A toothpaste for sensitive teeth will usually eliminate the pain within a few weeks. They all contain a compound that is equally effective in treating the sensitivity. This is only for mild sensitivity and should begin to work within a few days.

All of the other pain treatments are just temporary fixes and will usually only give you a few hours of relief. If you are desperate for a few hours of relief you can try rinsing the area vigorously with warm water, then brushing and flossing thoroughly and rinsing again. If that does not help much and you know the origin of the pain you can try putting some oil of clove, usually on a cotton pellet, into the area. Then do yourself a big favor and call your dentist and get in as soon as possible.