

Oral Health Screening

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**Prepared by:
Calgary Zone Community Oral Health Team
& the AHS Provincial Oral Health Office**

Healthy Mouth / Healthy Body

Ideal to include oral health exam in physical exam

“The health of your mouth provides a window into the health of your body. You are not healthy if your mouth is not healthy.”

Dr. Peter Cooney, Chief Dental Officer of Canada

Dental Coverage for Refugees

For those covered by the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP), initial services are limited to **emergency** relief of **pain** and/or **infection** only

Pain and infection may be present simultaneously, or separately

Oral Health Screening

Three criteria to help define a dental “**emergency**”:

- 1) **Pain**
- 2) **Infection/Swelling**
- 3) **Broken teeth**

Oral Health Screening

1) Pain

May not be visibly obvious

Common questions to inquire about dental pain:

- *Do you have any pain in your mouth at this time?*
- *Do you have any pain in your mouth that wakes you up at night?*
- *Do you have any pain in your mouth that prevents you from eating or makes eating difficult?*

Oral Health Screening

1) Pain

Additional questions:

- *If you have tooth pain to temperature changes, are your teeth sensitive to **hot** or cold?*
- *When you have tooth pain to temperature changes, does the pain stop as soon as the stimulus is removed, or does it linger (i.e. trigger a toothache)?*
- *If you currently do not have mouth or tooth pain, have you had any mouth or tooth pain at any time over the last year?*

Oral Health Screening

2) Infection/Swelling

Examine both outside and inside the mouth

- External - swelling is primarily seen in the cheek areas, but could also be located around the eyes, under the chin
- Internal - swelling is usually seen on the gums on the outer, or cheek side; or in the vestibule
 - may also be found on the inside of the gums, on the tongue side; floor of the mouth, under the tongue
- There may, or may not, be pain associated with the swelling

Oral Health Screening

3) Broken Teeth

If a patient has badly broken down teeth:

- these teeth are likely to be causing pain, but not always. The patient may report that the teeth were painful in the past, but no longer.
- you may, nor may not, see signs of swelling in the area

Even if there are no signs of pain and/or swelling, broken teeth can be classified as an “emergency”.

Oral Health Screening

Tips for conducting an oral health screening:

Areas to check:

- Extraoral
- Intraoral

Positioning of the client:

- Knee to knee – for preschoolers
- Facing the client – for children and adults

Oral Health Screening - Areas to Check

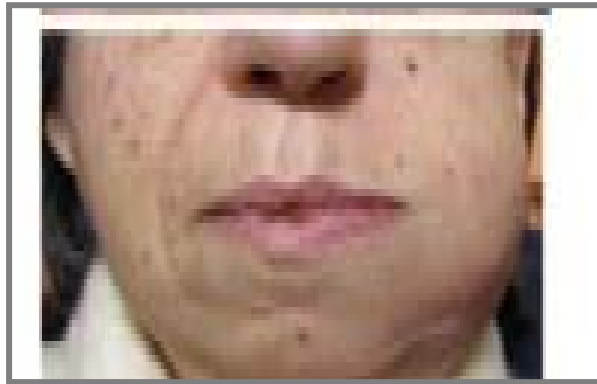
Extraoral

- Start with looking at the patient's profile and face
- Look for symmetry of their cheeks, jaw, and eyes – looking for any signs of swelling
- Look for changes in the color of skin around mouth
- Signs of infection might be: facial swelling, swollen lymph nodes, redness

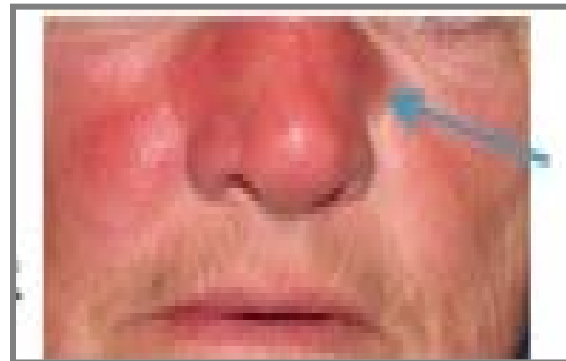


Oral Health Screening

Extraoral - Infection/Swelling & Color Changes



Facial swelling that
may be dentally
related



Enlarged lymph node

Oral Health Assessments

Intraoral - Lift the lip

- Retract the cheeks and lips to allow for view of areas not readily visible
- Examine all tissues including teeth, gums, tongue, cheeks, and the roof and floor of mouth
- For client of any age
- Disposable dental mirror can be used but is not necessary
- A flashlight is often helpful



Oral Health Screening

Intraoral - Infection/Swelling & Broken teeth

Signs of infection might include a swelling on the gums, obvious signs of drainage



Abscess with Extensive
Decay/Broken teeth

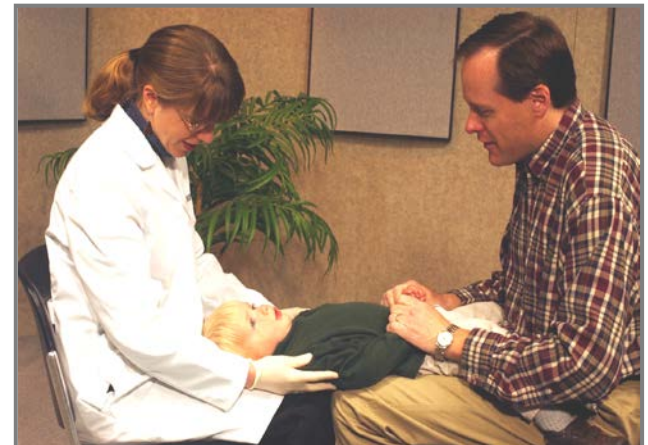


Draining Abscess

Oral Health Assessments - Positioning

Knee to Knee

- Effective with young children
- Provides comfort and support to child
- Involves the parent
- Allows clinician good access to lift the lip and view inside the mouth
- Disposable dental mirror can be used but is not necessary
- A flashlight may be helpful, but is not necessary



Oral Health Assessments - Positioning

Facing the Client

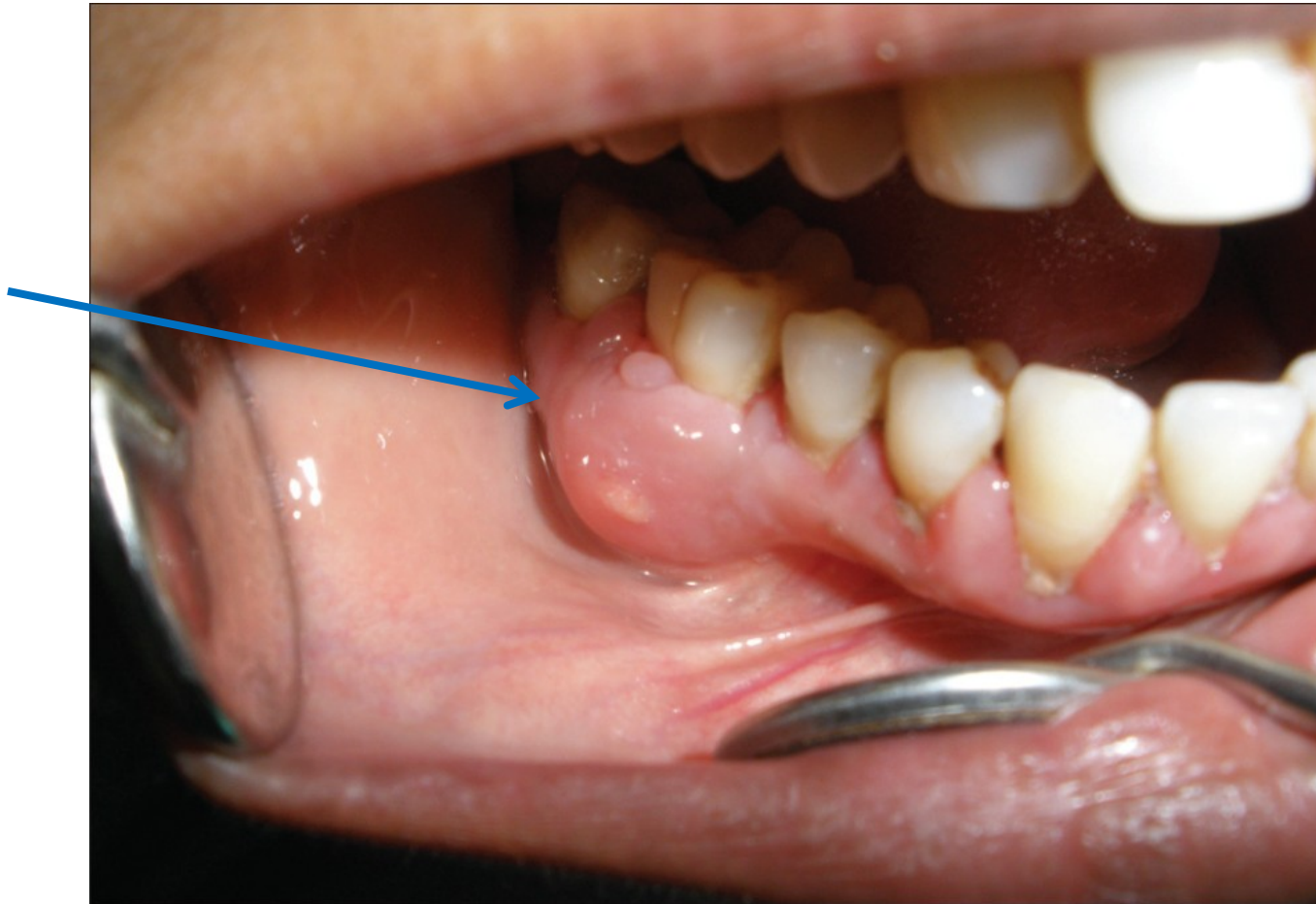
- For older children and adults
- Client can be standing or sitting
- Allows clinician good access to lift the lip and view inside the mouth
- A light makes it possible to view hard to see areas – a flashlight can be used



Decay – root tips remain



Dental abscess – gum swelling



Decay – broken teeth



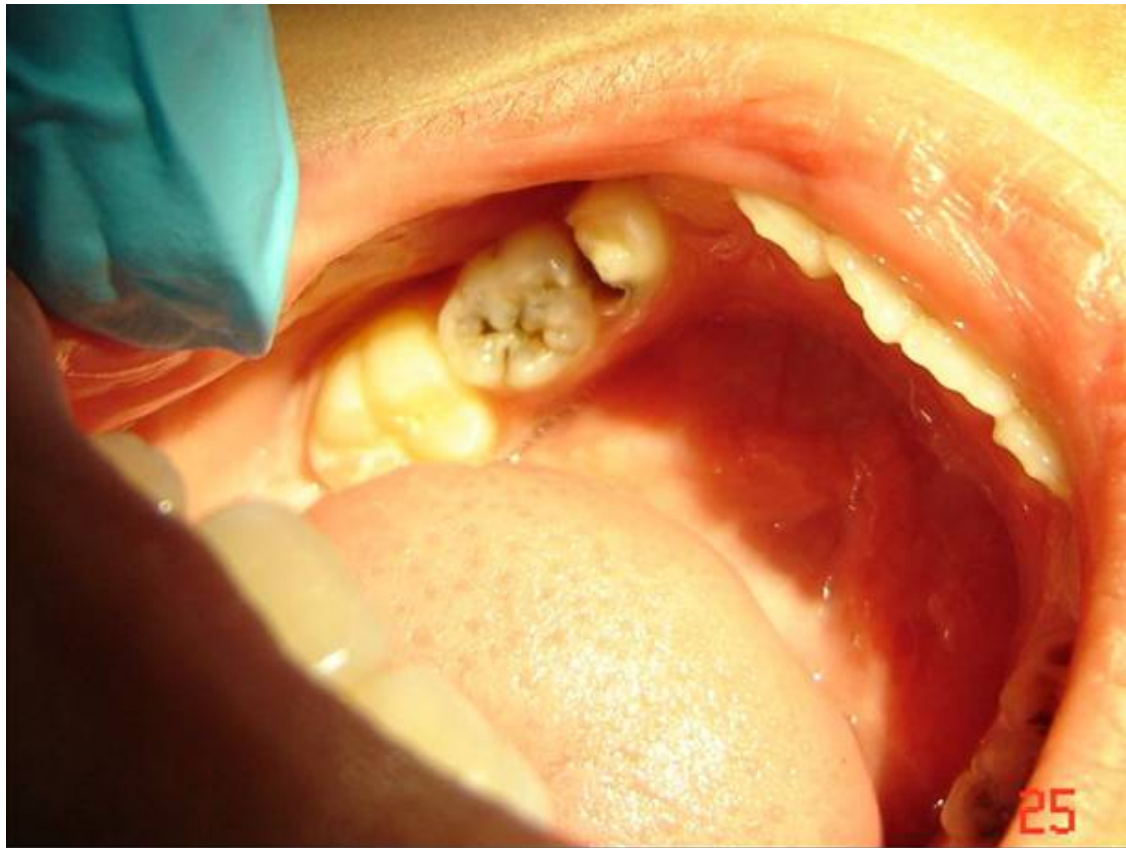
Decay – broken teeth



Decay – New tooth erupting underneath



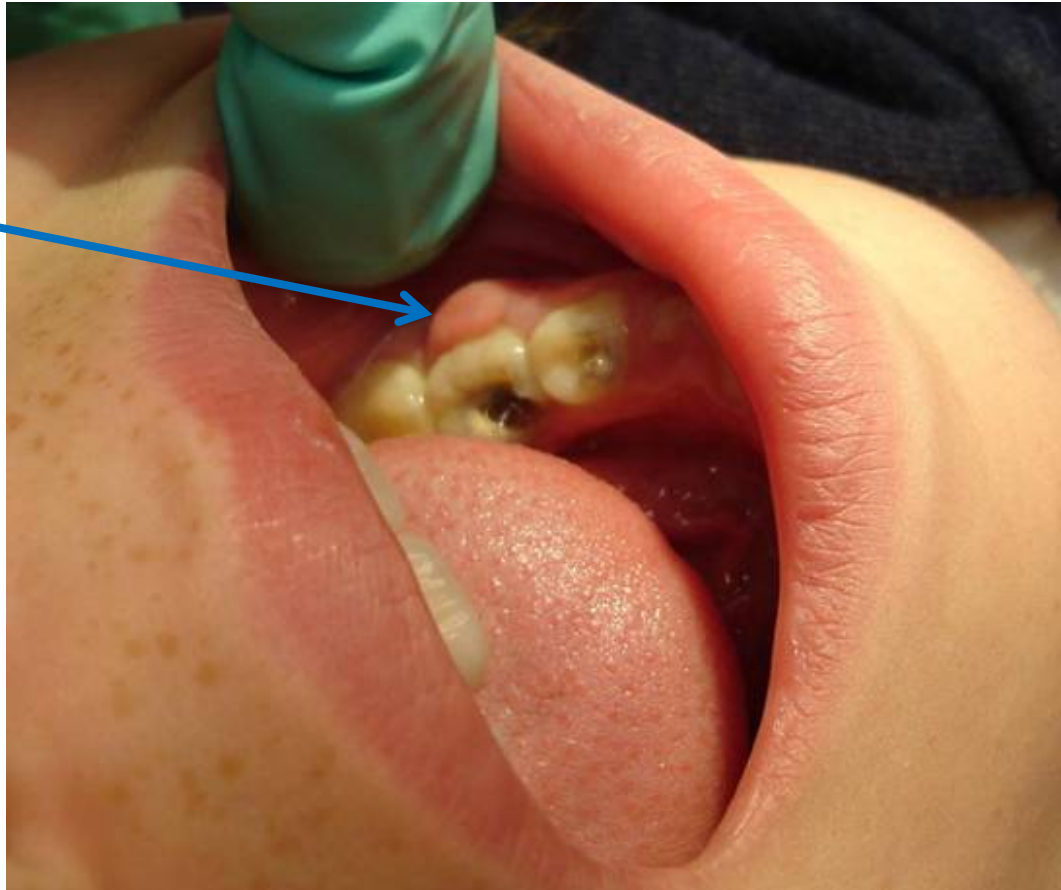
Decay – broken teeth



Decay – broken teeth



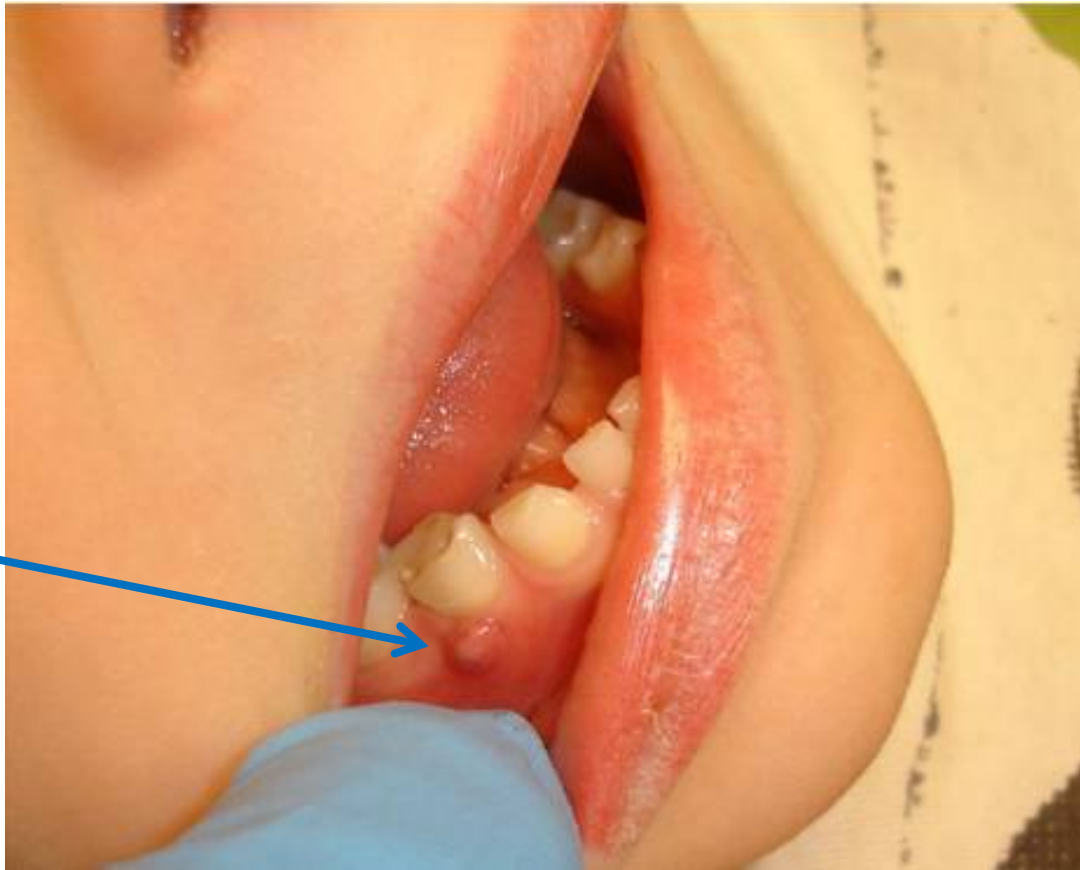
Decay and abscess



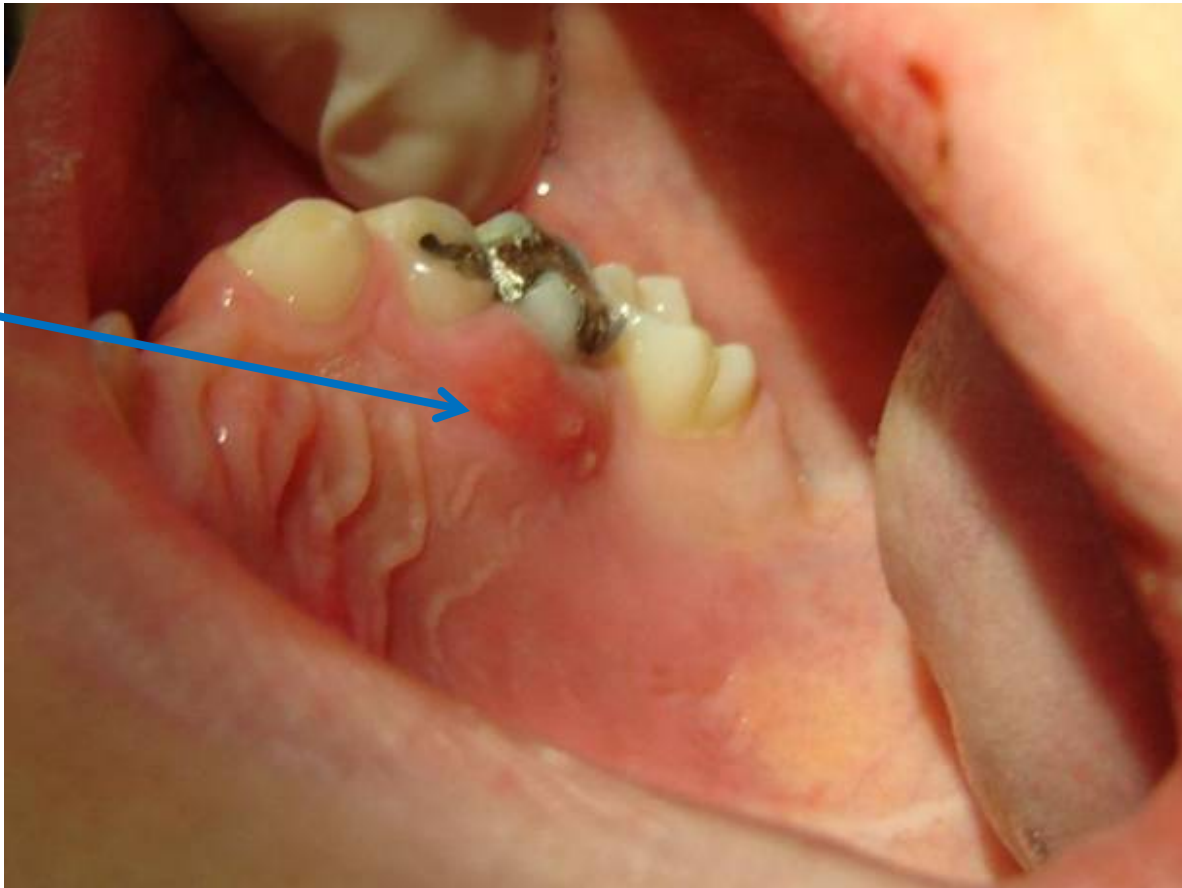
Dental abscess – gum swelling



Dental abscess – gum drainage



Dental abscess – gum drainage



Decay – broken teeth



Decay – possible pain



Decay – possible pain



Decay – possible pain



Referrals for Care

- IFHP coverage - limited to **emergency** relief of **pain** or **infection** only
- Offices accepting patients with IFHP coverage can be found at:

https://www.medavie.bluecross.ca/cs/ContentServer?c=ContentPage_P&pagename=IFHP_CIC_Public%2FContentPage_P%2FIFHP_CICOneColumnFull&cid=1181930640841

Patients/Sponsors can access information on health benefits for refugees at:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/arriving-healthcare.asp>

For Further Information

For questions regarding the oral health screening, contact:

Dr. Heidi Rabie (Calgary Zone) at

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Dr. Marianne Howell (Edmonton Zone) at:

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Note: the photographs used here are examples only; the same condition can present itself differently in individual clients