

Silicon Valley Endodontics & Microsurgery

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Tooth Emergency: ER or Endodontist? — A 60-Second Checklist

Most tooth emergencies belong with an endodontist, not the ER — but a few signs mean the hospital comes first. Full guide: svendodontics.com/is-a-root-canal-an-emergency.

GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM NOW IF ANY OF THESE IS TRUE

- Trouble breathing or swallowing — this can become an airway emergency.
- Facial swelling that is spreading toward the eye or down the neck.
- Fever above 101°F (38.3°C) together with facial or jaw swelling.
- Head injury, loss of consciousness, or bleeding that won't stop after 15 minutes of firm pressure.
- Jaw pain brought on by exertion with chest pressure, shortness of breath, or arm pain — call 911 (possible cardiac event).

Go to the ER first, then follow up with us — the tooth still needs treatment afterward.

CALL US SAME-DAY — (669) 234-2354 — IF ANY OF THESE IS TRUE

- Severe toothache, or throbbing pain that wakes you at night.
- Swelling of the gum or face near a tooth, a pimple-like bump on the gum, or a bad taste (pus).
- A knocked-out, broken, or pushed-out-of-place tooth — for a knocked-out adult tooth, the first 30 minutes matter most.
- Pain when biting, or lingering pain after hot or cold.
- A tooth that has darkened or become loose after an injury.

We hold same-day emergency slots seven days a week, including Saturday and Sunday 8 AM–3 PM.

Why the ER can't fix a toothache

Emergency rooms do not have dentists on staff. For tooth pain they can only prescribe antibiotics and pain medication — the underlying problem is unchanged, and the pain returns when the prescriptions run out. National average cost of an ER dental visit: \$1,500–\$2,000, with no definitive treatment. An endodontist can diagnose the cause and treat it the same day, typically for less than the ER visit alone.

While you wait to be seen

Ibuprofen 600 mg alternated with acetaminophen 1000 mg every three hours controls most dental pain (confirm doses are safe for you; do not exceed 3,000 mg of acetaminophen in 24 hours). Cold compress outside the cheek for swelling. Do not place aspirin on the gum — it burns the tissue. Do not use a heating pad on the face with swelling.

When in doubt, call — we'll tell you which door to go to.

(669) 234-2354 — answered seven days a week. Weekend hours: Saturday and Sunday 8 AM–3 PM.

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Consistent with guidance from the American Association of Endodontists (AAE) and the European Society of Endodontology (ESE) on the management of endodontic emergencies and dental infection. Full sources: svendodontics.com/is-a-root-canal-an-emergency. General guidance only — if you believe you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911.