

WHY IS MY TOOTH GREY?

Color changes in the teeth are relatively common, and do not always indicate a serious problem. First, you should distinguish between a widespread color change to **all teeth** versus a noteworthy color change in **a single tooth**.

WIDESPREAD COLOR CHANGE



When **all of the teeth are grey** in color, you could be suffering from teeth staining, a problem with tooth development, or simply aging.

A SINGLE TOOTH



A **singular tooth** becoming grey is usually caused by trauma.

IS MY GREY TOOTH "DEAD"?

If your grey tooth doesn't respond to improved oral hygiene or whitening treatments, **the nerves inside are likely dead**. Damage to the nerves can be caused by trauma to the face or a slowly growing infection.

Similar to the way a bruise changes in color, the dead nerves and blood vessels within the chamber of the tooth undergo a **degradation process**. Over time this will cause the enamel of your tooth to appear purple, grey, dark yellow, or black.



DOES A "DEAD TOOTH" MEAN I NEED A ROOT CANAL TREATMENT?

A **root canal treatment** is the procedure necessary to remove a dead pulp from within a tooth. To diagnose your need for a root canal treatment, your dentist will do a thorough visual inspection, take one or more dental x-rays, and perform temperature testing to diagnose the responsiveness of the nerves.

If your dentist diagnoses a necrotic pulp (or "dead tooth"), your **treatment options will be either a root canal treatment to save the tooth**, or an extraction to remove the tooth. Either option will prevent the spread of infection to the airway, bloodstream or brain. **Do NOT ignore a grey tooth!**

IS MY GREY TOOTH AN EMERGENCY?



Discoloration alone is likely not an emergency. However, if you have swelling in the gums, pus drainage, or pain when you chew, you may have an urgent problem. Regardless if you don't feel these critical symptoms yet, be sure to mention concerns about your grey tooth to your dentist at your next visit.

NEXT STEPS: TREAT YOUR GREY TOOTH

Seeing your dentist regularly for consistent check-ups with x-rays can help you reduce the risk for a dental emergency. If you or a loved one have a grey tooth and have not yet discussed the issue with a dentist, now is the time!