# South Gate Dentist Details 4 Warning Signs of Dental Sepsis

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Simple Dental, a general and emergency dental practice in South Gate, California, issued plain-language guidance on what dental sepsis feels like, ahead of Sepsis Awareness Month in September. At least 1.7 million U.S. adults develop sepsis each year, the CDC reports.

The guidance addresses a gap the practice sees in urgent-care conversations: patients know what a toothache feels like, but few know what it feels like when a tooth infection stops being a dental problem and becomes a medical emergency. Nationally, more than 2 million emergency department visits a year involve dental conditions, according to federal Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project data, and the American Dental Association reports that abscesses and untreated decay have historically accounted for close to 80% of those visits.

"Patients rarely describe sepsis as a toothache. They describe feeling wrong all over," said Kourosh Keihani, DDS, a dentist at Simple Dental who holds active California dental license 63776. "The goal this September is simple: help families recognize that shift and act early."

A dental abscess forms when bacteria move out of the tooth pulp into surrounding bone or tissue, according to Sepsis Alliance, and an untreated dental infection can lead to sepsis. Sepsis is the body's overwhelming response to an infection, and the CDC classifies it as a medical emergency that can cause tissue damage, organ failure and death without fast treatment. In a typical year, one in three people who die in a U.S. hospital had sepsis during that hospitalization, the agency reports. The Mayo Clinic notes that a tooth abscess will not resolve without treatment, and that pain often improves sharply if the abscess ruptures, which can leave patients believing the problem has passed.

The distinction patients ask about most is how the two stages feel different. A localized dental infection tends to stay local: throbbing pain in one tooth, tenderness when biting, gum swelling, a bad taste or pain that worsens at night. Signals that involve the whole body are the ones clinicians treat as urgent. Sepsis Alliance groups them into four, using the acronym TIME:

Temperature ? higher or lower than normal, including chills or shivering.
Infection ? signs or symptoms of an existing infection, such as a known abscess, swelling or fever.
Mental decline ? confusion, unusual sleepiness or difficulty waking.
Extremely ill ? severe pain or discomfort, often described as feeling like something is seriously wrong.

Rapid heartbeat, fast breathing, clammy skin and extreme fatigue are also commonly reported alongside those four.

Those signals do not establish a diagnosis. Sepsis is diagnosed clinically, using examination and laboratory testing, and the same symptoms can point to a spreading facial or neck infection, an airway problem or another serious complication of a dental infection rather than sepsis specifically. The practical instruction is the same either way. The Mayo Clinic advises anyone with a tooth abscess who develops fever with facial swelling, and cannot reach a dentist, to go to an emergency room, and to go to an emergency room in any case of trouble breathing or swallowing. Rapid diagnosis and treatment are what determine outcomes in sepsis, according to the CDC, and the agency notes that 87% of adults with sepsis already have the infection when they arrive at the hospital, which places early recognition largely with patients and families.

"No dentist can diagnose sepsis over the phone, and no patient should wait to be certain," Keihani said. "If the whole body feels involved, emergency medical care comes first and dental treatment follows."

The practice has published the full guidance, including what a patient can do before an emergency dental appointment and when to bypass the dental office entirely, at https://simpledentalca.com/services/emergency-dentist/.

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advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider for personal health decisions.

Editor's Note ? Source References

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About Simple Dental

Simple Dental is a general and emergency dental practice serving South Gate and South Los Angeles from two Los Angeles County offices. Services include general, restorative and cosmetic dentistry, same-day crowns, tooth extractions and emergency dental care. Treatment is provided by dentists trained at the USC School of Dentistry, including Kourosh Keihani, DDS, California dental license 63776. Simple Dental, 8617 California Ave, South Gate, CA 90280. Phone: (323) 999-2378. https://simpledentalca.com/

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# Simple Dental South Gate

*Simple Dental, we believe that great dental care should feel effortless. Our mission is to care for every patient the way we would for our own family?warmly, gently, and with complete trust.*

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