

Dental Preparedness



I don't like the dentist. I know, I know, most people don't! But I dislike the sadist...err dentist so much that the thought of writing this article has given me the heebie-jeebies for some time. However, a recent dental problem resulting in a toothache spurred me to write this.

Prevention

Brush, floss, yada, yada, yada. All kidding aside, this is absolutely one area where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This being a preparedness related article, here are some tips to help you be prepared for a future where going to the dentist isn't an option.

Toothpaste has a 1-2-year shelf life, so we could effectively keep a year's supply on hand, rotating and restocking as it is used. Toothbrushes obviously don't have an expiration date, but should be rotated every few months. Dental floss is another item that has no expiration date, nor do the dental flossers. Dental floss is an item I put in each BOB. It can be used for floss, cordage, snares and anything else lightweight rope could be used for.

Baking soda is an item with an infinite shelf life that can be used as toothpaste. Simply put some in a smallish container, add water and stir into a paste...mmm tasty (sarcasm). Hydrogen peroxide is an item that, according to the ADA (American Dental Association), is used in many commercial tooth whiteners.

Dental Pain When the Stuff Hits the Fan

To me there is no pain like a toothache. It can make me miserable like almost nothing else! We're lucky to live in a time where we get care fairly quickly to help us if we have dental pain. Imagine having to use an ice skate to remove your own tooth (a reference to the movie *Castaway*)! Seriously, what would you do if, for some reason, you had a toothache and couldn't get to the dentist? Here are some suggestions.

There are several over the counter numbing agents one could use and I personally think they are a must have.

Natural Tooth Ache Remedies

Because what works well for one person, might not for another, I think it is wise to have a few of these on hand. Many of the ingredients listed in many remedy articles can be used for other purposes as well.

Worst Case

What if the problem is worse than a tooth ache and you can't get to the dentist? There are a few things that you can do now to prepare for this. The Hesperian Foundation offers a book called *Where there is No Dentist*. You can download a free PDF copy or purchase a book for \$17.00. Amazon has used copies a little cheaper, but I think supporting the Hesperian Foundation is worth the extra dollar or two.

This book is fantastic! Like all Hesperian books, it is meant to educate villagers in third world countries with no formal education or training. Topics range from learning and teaching about teeth and gums, treating and diagnosing different dental problems like toothaches, loose teeth, cavities, cementing fillings and removal of teeth (without an ice skate). It has illustrations on almost every page to help explain the different topics.

There are a few supplies that you could stock now that could be of great use in a dental emergency. From Duluth Trading Company: Duluth Trading Company Dr. Click's Kit: Dental Tools with 101 Uses. As the title suggests, this kit has many other uses besides dental tools, one being a great lock picking set. One of the Prepared Christian sponsors, Camping Survival, carries Dr. Stahl's Emergency Dental Kit. as well.

Final Thoughts

Sure, we should be brushing and flossing now, but like I said at the beginning, to me there is no pain like a toothache. Dental preparedness requires some forethought and preparations to make sure we can take care of dental emergencies should they ever occur when we cannot get to a dentist.

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