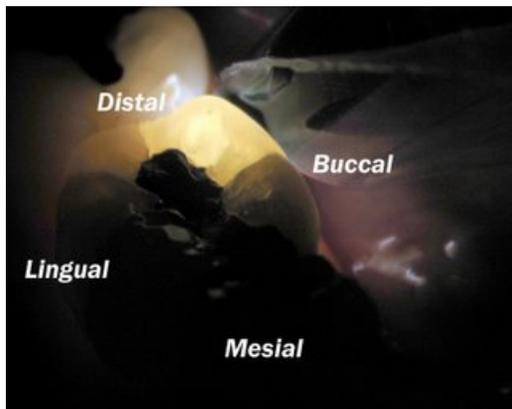


## Cracked Teeth

Cracked teeth demonstrate many types of symptoms including; pain when chewing, temperature sensitivities, or discomfort upon release of biting pressure. It is also common for pain to come and go, making it difficult to diagnose the source of discomfort. This is why we use a bite stick and see if your pain comes from biting down or releasing? Also, we can shine light through your tooth to visualize the crack. This is called transillumination.



Chewing can cause movement of the cracked pieces of your tooth, and the pulp within the tooth becomes irritated. At the same time, when biting pressure is released, the crack can close quickly, resulting in sharp pain. Eventually, the pulp will become damaged and tooth will consistently hurt, even when you are not chewing. It is possible that cracks can lead to infection of the pulp tissue, which can spread to the bone and gum surrounding the problematic tooth.

## Types of Cracks

### *Craze Lines*

These are tiny cracks that only affect the outer enamel of the tooth. These cracks are more common in adults. These types of cracks are superficial and are usually of no concern.

### ***Fractured Cusp***

When a cusp becomes weakened, a fracture may result. The cusp may break off or be removed by a dentist. A fractured cusp rarely damages the pulp, so a root canal is not always necessary. Your dentist will usually restore the tooth with a full crown.



### ***Cracked Tooth***

This type of crack extends from the chewing surface of the tooth and vertically migrates towards the root. In some cases, the crack may extend below the gum line. It is possible for the crack to extend further into the root. Damage to the pulp is common. In this case, root canal treatment is usually necessary. A cracked tooth that is not treated will worsen, resulting in the loss of the tooth. Therefore, early detection is essential.



### ***Split Tooth***

A split tooth is usually the result of an untreated cracked tooth. It can be identified by a crack with distinct segments. This type of tooth can never be saved. Yet, the position and extent of the problem will dictate whether any portion of the tooth can be saved, but the prognosis is usually poor and should be extracted.



### ***Vertical Root Fracture***

A vertical root fracture often times begins as a smaller crack in the crown and extends towards the apex or tip of the root. Also, it may begin at the root end and extend toward the chewing surface of the tooth. In either case, they may show minimal symptoms and may go unnoticed. Treatment involves endodontic surgery if a portion of the tooth can be saved by removal of the fractured root. Otherwise, the tooth will have to be extracted.

