

Smilematters

PATIENT FACT SHEET

Tips for Dealing with Dental Emergencies

Of course, we all know that dental emergencies can happen. We want to remind you that you can reduce the chances of damaging your teeth, lips, cheek and tongue by wearing a mouthguard when participating in sports or recreational activities such as soccer, bicycling, roller blading, hockey or lacrosse. Here are some simple tips for you to follow if you are faced with one of the more common dental emergencies.

When a Tooth Is Knocked Out:

- Immediately call your dentist for an emergency appointment.
- Hold the tooth by the crown, not the root, and gently rinse the tooth in water if it is dirty.
- Do not scrub the tooth or remove any attached tissue fragments.
- If possible, gently insert and hold the tooth in its socket or in your mouth between the cheek and gum to keep it most.
- Otherwise, put the tooth in a cup of milk and get to the dentist as quickly as possible.
- Remember to take the tooth with you!

Broken Tooth:

- Rinse your mouth with warm water.
- Use an ice pack or cold compress to keep any swelling down.
- Use ibuprofen, not aspirin, for pain. Aspirin is an anti-coagulant, which may cause excessive bleeding in a dental emergency.
- Immediately go to your dentist, who will determine treatment based on how badly the tooth is broken.

Emergency Tool Kit

- Dentist's phone numbers (home and office)
- Saline solution
- Clean handkerchief
- Gauze
- Small container with lid
- Ibuprofen

Broken Jaw:

- Apply cold compresses to control swelling.
- Go to your dentist or a hospital emergency room immediately.

When the Gums or Tissues Are Injured:

Injuries to the inside of the mouth such as tears, puncture wounds or cuts to the cheek, lips or tongue should be cleaned right away with warm water and the injured person taken to the emergency room for care. Bleeding from a cut tongue can be reduced by pulling the tongue forward and using gauze to place pressure on the wound.

Bitten Lip or Tongue:

Clean the area gently with a cloth and apply a cold compress to reduce swelling. If the bleeding doesn't stop, go to a hospital emergency room immediately.