

Race Against Time Management of Oral Trauma

Don't ignore traumatic injuries to the teeth

A growing child is active and liable to have accidents of trauma. In a traumatic accident, the teeth and oral tissues may also be injured. The chances for the injured oral structure to be healed and the damaged teeth to be saved often depend on whether treatment is done appropriately and promptly.

Oral structure injury

After a trauma, oral tissues such as the lips, gums, oral mucosa, tooth sockets and even the upper and lower jawbones may be injured and bleed.

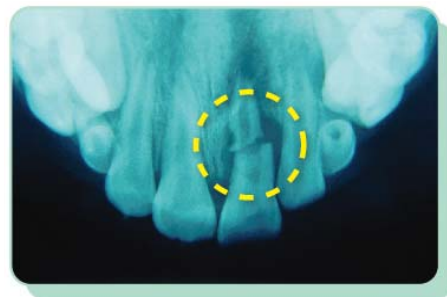
Management:

Place a clean gauze or handkerchief over the bleeding area. Ask the injured person to bite on it for at least 15 minutes to stop the bleeding. Then he should immediately go and see a dentist.

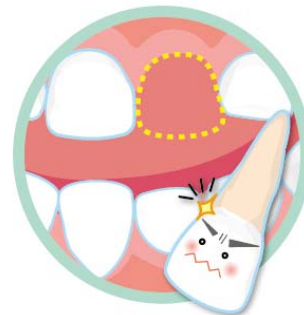


After a tooth is traumatized, the following consequences may occur:

- No apparent damage to the tooth
- The tooth becomes loose
- The crown is fractured
- The root is fractured



- The tooth is dislocated, intruded/ pushed into the jaw
- The entire tooth is knocked out

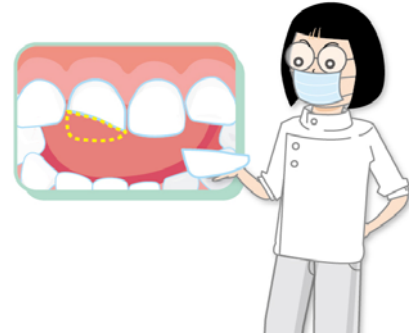


Prompt management after injury

Although there might not be any apparent damage to the teeth after the injury, pulp necrosis (death) may occur. Go for a detailed check-up at the dental clinic immediately after the injury and have follow-up reviews regularly as advised by the dentist. The dentist will give the following treatment according to your condition:

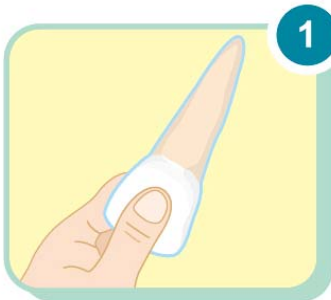
- smoothen the sharp edges of the fractured tooth and apply topical fluoride
- fill/ splint the affected tooth
- treat the pulp
- extract the tooth (take the tooth out)

If the crown is fractured, you should try and find the fractured piece. Pick it up and go to see a dentist immediately.

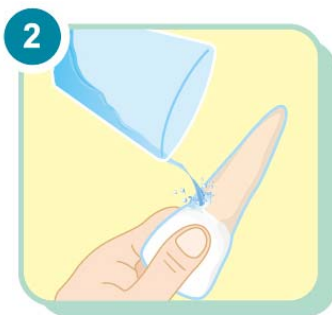


When the whole tooth is knocked out.....

If the whole permanent tooth is knocked out after the traumatic injury, you should keep calm and take the following actions:



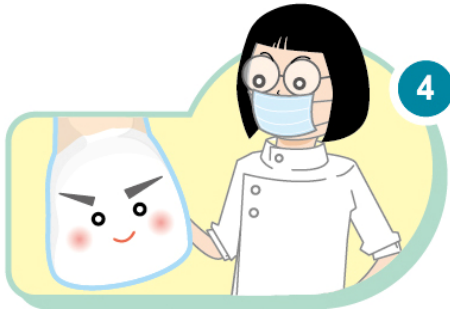
1. Pick up the knocked out tooth. Holding the crown without touching the root.



2. Use half a glass of plain water or milk to gently rinse off the dirt on the surface of the tooth. **Don't** wash or scrub the root to avoid damaging the soft tissues around the root.



3. Use the adjacent tooth as a reference, replace the tooth back into the socket and gently bite your teeth to hold the tooth in place. The sooner the tooth is put back, the greater is the chance of it being preserved.



4. If there is any difficulty in inserting the tooth into the socket, immerse the tooth in a container filled with either plain milk or saliva of the injured person. Seek treatment from the dentist immediately.

Emergency treatment & follow-up review

Following traumatic injuries to the oral tissues or teeth, it is critical to render appropriate treatment as soon as possible. After treatment, the injured oral tissues or tooth should be reviewed regularly.

Primary school students who are eligible to participate in the School Dental Care Service can seek care at a nearby School Dental Clinic. The attending Dental officer and Dental Therapist will provide emergency treatment to the injured patient. If emergency service is required outside the office hours, please attend the Accident & Emergency Department of the nearest hospital or the private dental clinics.