

Race Against Time-Management of Oral Trauma

Seek Emergency treatment without delay

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 structures to be healed and the damaged teeth to be saved often depend on whether treatment is done appropriately and promptly.

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.

When the whole tooth is knocked out...

If a deciduous tooth is knocked out, you should go and see a dentist as soon as possible. If the whole permanent tooth is knocked out after the traumatic injury, you should keep calm and take the following actions before having an immediate consultation with a dentist:

1. Pick up the knocked out tooth, hold the crown and avoid touching the root;



2. Briefly rinse off the dirt on the surface of the permanent tooth with half a glass of plain water or milk. Don't scrub the root to avoid damaging the soft tissues around the root;



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



4. If there is difficulty in inserting the permanent tooth into the socket, immerse it in a container filled with either plain milk or saliva of the injured person and seek emergency dental treatment immediately. If we can minimize the extraoral dry time and immediately seek treatment from the dentist, it will greatly improve the treatment outcome.



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

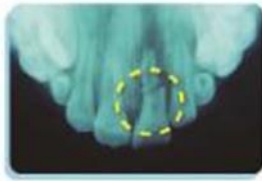
- The tooth is displaced, rotated, intruded or extruded



- The crown is cracked or fractured



- The root is cracked or fractured



Management of traumatic injuries to oral structures

After a traumatic injury, oral tissues such as the lips, gums, oral mucosa, tooth sockets and even the upper and lower jawbones may be injured and bleeding occurs. 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.



Management of traumatic dental injuries

Although there may not be any noticeable damage to the teeth after the traumatic dental injury, root cracks or fractures, and pulp necrosis (death) may occur. Seek emergency treatment at the dental clinic immediately after the injury and have follow-up reviews regularly as advised by the dentist. Crown fractures are common after traumatic dental injuries. The dentist may render the following treatment according to the nature of the injury, such as:

1. smoothing of the sharp edges of the fractured tooth and topical fluoride application
2. filling / splinting the affected tooth
3. pulp treatment
4. tooth extraction (tooth removal)

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

