



Broken or Knocked-Out Tooth

Signs & Symptoms

- Loss of a tooth or part of a tooth.
- Nicked or chipped tooth or teeth.

Causes

An injury or a strain on a tooth, such as from biting on a hard object can cause a broken, knocked-out, or chipped tooth.

Treatment

When a tooth gets knocked out, go to the dentist as soon as possible. Keep the tooth moist until you get to the dentist. Follow up treatment is also needed.

Questions to Ask

Has one or more teeth been broken or knocked out?



NO

YES



(from a dentist or hospital emergency department)

Self-Care / Prevention

For a Knocked-Out Tooth

- If you find the tooth, pick it up by the crown. Avoid contact with the root.
- Rinse off the rest of the tooth with clear water. Do not scrub the tooth or remove any tissue that is attached to the tooth.

- If possible (and if you're alert), gently put the tooth back in its socket or hold it under your tongue. Otherwise, put the tooth in a glass of milk, cool salt water, or a wet cloth. Don't let the tooth dry out.
- If the gum is bleeding, hold a gauze pad or a clean tissue tightly in place over the wound.
- Try to get to a dentist within 30 minutes of the accident. If the dentist is not available, go to a hospital emergency department. Take the tooth with you.

For a Broken Tooth

- To reduce swelling, apply a cold compress to the area.
- Save any broken tooth fragments. Put them in a wet cloth or milk. Take them to the dentist.

To Protect Teeth From Damage and Injury

- Don't chew on ice, pens, pencils, etc.
- Don't use your teeth to pry things open.
- If you smoke a pipe, don't bite down on the stem.
- If you grind your teeth at night, ask your dentist if you should be fitted or a bite plate.
- If you play contact sports like football or hockey, wear a protective mouthguard. Mouthguards may also be useful for non-contact sports, such as gymnastics. Discuss the need of using a mouthguard with your dentist.
- Always wear a seat belt when riding in a car.
- Don't suck on lemons or chew aspirin or vitamin C tablets. Acids in these wear away tooth enamel.