DEALING WITH DENTAL EMERGENCIES

Dental emergencies happen anytime, and knowing what to do could make a big difference. Here is a quick summary of the most common dental emergencies and the appropriate actions to take. Drag the emergency to the corresponding action to take.

Soft-tissue injury (gum, lip or tongue)

Objects caught between teeth

Knocked-out permanent tooth

Broken tooth

Knocked-out baby tooth

Toothache

Possible broken jaw

EMERGENCY	ACTION TO TAKE
	Do not place aspirin on the gum or on the aching tooth. A mild over-the-counter analgesic such as acetaminophen can be given for pain. Contact your dentist.
	Try to gently remove the object with dental floss. If you can't remove the object, call your dentist.
	Find the tooth. Pick it up by the crown, never by the root. If visibly dirty, rinse it gently in cool water for no longer than 5 seconds. Do not scrub or wrap it in tissue! If possible, place the tooth in the socket and hold it in place with gauze or a clean wash cloth. If you can't put the tooth it in the socket, place in a clean container with cold milk. If milk is not available, place the tooth in cold Gatorade or cold contact lens solution. Water or saliva can be used as a last resort. See your dentist as quickly as possible. Knocked out teeth having the greatest chance of being saved are those seen by a dentist and returned to the socket within 1 hour.
	Rinse dirt or debris from the injury with warm water. Place a cold compress on the injured area to avoid swelling. Locate and save any tooth fragments. Call your dentist immediately.

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	Go immediately to the emergency room. Immobilize the jaw and apply a cold compress to control swelling.
	Do not place the tooth back into the socket. It may cause problems with the development of the permanent tooth. Apply gauze to the area for about 15 minutes to control bleeding. Call your dentist.
	Apply direct pressure with a clean cloth or a moist tea bag to the area involved. Add a cold compress if swelling is involved. If bleeding persists after 15 to 20 minutes of pressure, call your dentist.

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