

## Be prepared for dental emergencies

**Your son or daughter has just had a tooth knocked out during a soccer game. What do you do?**


Many parents will face similar questions this summer as youth sports schedules get into full swing. Between 13 and 39 percent of all dental injuries are sports related, and knocked-out teeth are among the most common.

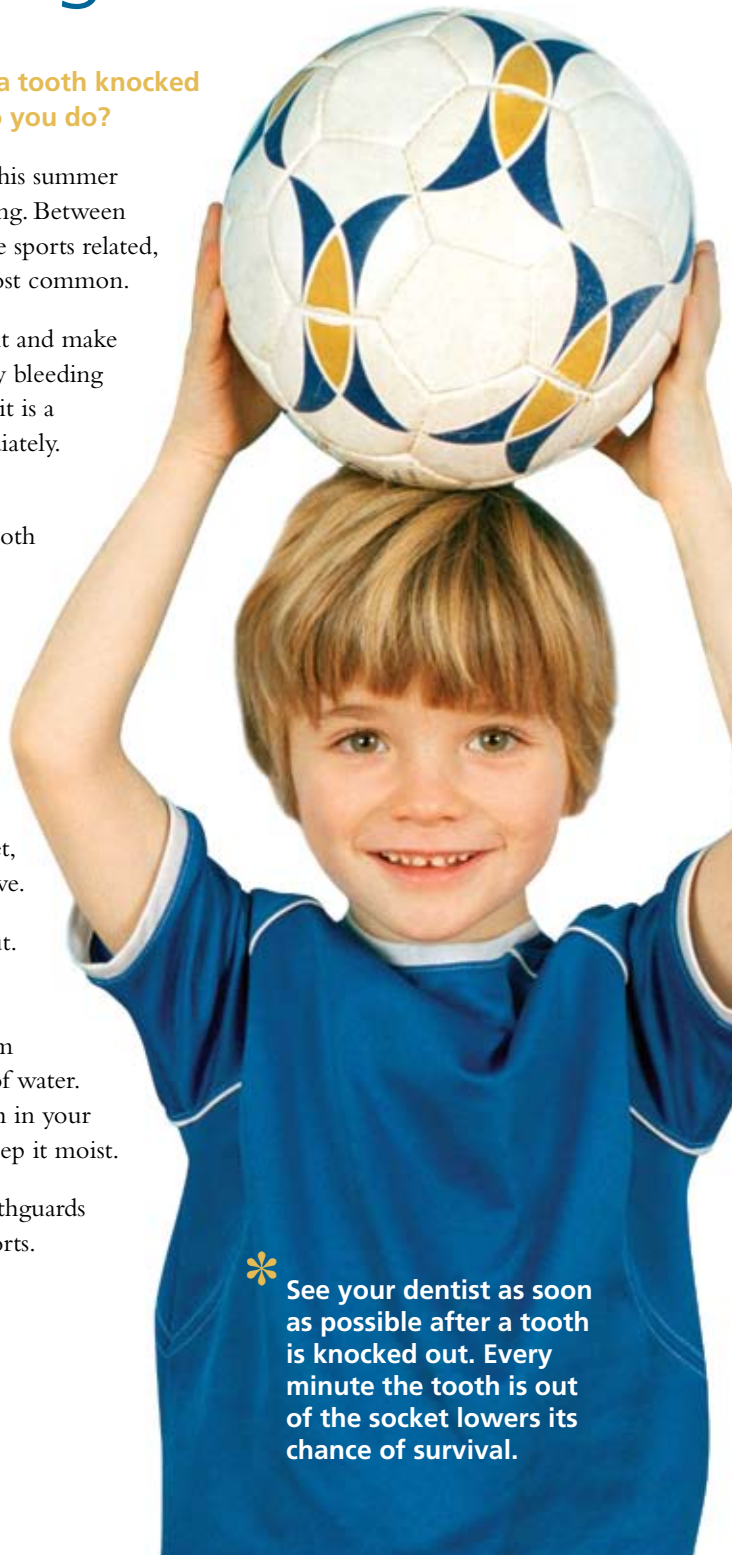
If your child's tooth is knocked out, find it and make sure to not handle it by the root. Treat any bleeding by applying direct pressure with gauze. If it is a permanent tooth, call your dentist immediately. Baby teeth cannot be reimplanted.

Rinse the tooth in water or milk if the tooth is dirty. Do not scrub the tooth or try to remove tissue fragments. After rinsing the tooth, try to put it back into the socket, level with the other teeth. You can have your child bite down gently on gauze or a moistened tea bag so the tooth stays there. Make sure to tell him or her to be careful not to swallow the tooth. The sooner the tooth is back in the socket, the better the chance the tooth will survive.

It is important to not let the tooth dry out. If the tooth cannot be put back into the socket, put it in a container with whole milk, saline solution, your saliva, or a warm solution of ¼ teaspoon of salt to a quart of water. If no container is available, place the tooth in your mouth between the cheek and gum to keep it moist.

To help prevent dental emergencies, mouthguards should be worn while playing contact sports.

 See your dentist as soon as possible after a tooth is knocked out. Every minute the tooth is out of the socket lowers its chance of survival.



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# BRUSH UP

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## Why can't I view my spouse's claim history?

Privacy laws prevent a person from viewing information on a dependent/spouse over the age of 18. With the member's permission, another person on the policy (age 18 or older) can view the page and even perform functions on the member's behalf. To allow access, members can simply log in to **HumanaDental.com**, click on "Change My Preferences," and then choose "Manage Family Member Access."

## Tips for other tooth troubles

A knocked-out tooth is not the only dental emergency. Here are some other urgent situations and how to handle them:

- › **Bitten lip or tongue:** Clean the area gently with a cloth and apply cold compresses to reduce any swelling. If the bleeding doesn't stop, immediately take your child to a hospital emergency room.
- › **Broken tooth:** Rinse the child's mouth with warm water to clean the area. Use cold compresses on the area to keep any swelling down. Call your dentist immediately.
- › **Jaw possibly broken:** Apply cold compresses to control swelling. Immediately take the child to your dentist or an emergency room.
- › **Objects caught between teeth:** Try to gently remove the object with dental floss. Never use a sharp instrument to remove any object stuck between teeth. If you can't dislodge the object using dental floss, contact your dentist.
- › **Toothache:** Rinse the child's mouth with warm water to clean it out. Gently use dental floss to ensure no food or other debris is caught between the teeth. Never put aspirin or any other painkiller against the gums near the aching tooth because it may burn the gum tissue. If the pain persists, contact your dentist.

Source: American Dental Association



## Pack a dental emergency kit

An emergency kit can come in handy when faced with a dental crisis. Include the following:

- + Dentist's home and office phone numbers
- + Handkerchief or small clean cloth
- + Gauze
- + Toothbrush, toothpaste, and floss
- + Small, lidded container
- + Saline solution
- + Water
- + Ibuprofen



### Sports drinks can damage teeth

Sports drinks are good for rehydrating your body, but they can have damaging effects on your teeth.

Studies have found that the high acid levels of sports drinks can cause irreversible damage to tooth enamel, which could lead to severe tooth decay. In fact, sports drinks may be worse for your teeth than soda.

Dentists suggest drinking sports drinks and colas in moderation, substituting water or milk when possible.