

Dental Emergencies

(NAPSA)—While injuries to the mouth may not be life threatening, they can warrant a visit to the emergency department.

These tips, offered by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), will help you know what to do in a dental emergency.

Knocked Out Tooth

Find the tooth. Gently rinse, but do not scrub the tooth, to remove dirt and debris. Place the clean tooth in your mouth. Do not store the tooth in the mouth of a young child. Instead, place the tooth in a clean cloth or gauze and immerse it in milk. Do not attempt to place the tooth back in its socket because this could cause further damage. Seek immediate medical attention.

“If a child’s primary tooth is knocked loose, the patient should see a dentist within a day or two,” said Lucy Gibney, MD, of ACEP. “Even though children lose these primary teeth normally, trauma that causes a tooth to become loose could actually damage the permanent tooth below.”

Broken Tooth

Rinse your mouth with warm water. Place cold compresses over the face in the area of the injury. Locate and save any broken tooth fragments. Seek immediate medical attention.

Loosened Tooth

If a tooth is moved slightly forwards or backwards, gently use light pressure with your finger to reposition the tooth to its normal alignment. Do not try to force the tooth back into its socket. Hold the tooth in place with a moist tissue or gauze. Seek medical attention within 30 minutes of the injury.



Most health departments have information on low-cost dental care.

Cut or Bitten Tongue, Lip or Cheek Lining

These wounds should be cleaned gently with a clean cloth. Apply cold compresses to reduce swelling and bleeding. If bleeding does not stop, seek immediate medical attention.

Apply ice to bruised areas. If there is bleeding, apply firm but gentle pressure with a clean gauze or cloth. If bleeding does not stop after 15 minutes or it cannot be controlled by simple pressure, go to a hospital emergency department.

Toothache

Toothaches can be extremely painful and cause headaches, fever and sleeplessness. If you have a toothache, do not place aspirin on the aching tooth or gum. Rinse the mouth with warm water. Floss to remove food that may be trapped.